

Cobham House Vineyard, Gold Street
Landscape and Visual Evidence and Appraisal
Volume 1 Landscape and Visual Evidence
September 2024



Ref: 2537-TFC-00-ZZ-RE-L-8001

The [terra firma](https://www.terrafirmaconsultancy.com) Consultancy Ltd.
www.terrafirmaconsultancy.com

Project reference: 2537

Date	Rev	By	Chk	Comments
18.09.24	P01	NT	LF	Draft issue
24.09.24	P02	NT	LF	Updated on completion of Volume 2
27.09.24	P03	NT	LF	Updates to Introduction

Contents

1. Introduction	3
1.1. Appointment	3
1.2. Report structure	3
1.3. Project brief	3
1.4. Site location	4
1.5. Site development history	4
2. Policy and guidance framework	5
2.2. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF December 2023)	5
2.3. Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)	6
2.4. Gravesham Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study, 2016	6
2.5. Gravesham Green Belt Study, 2018	6
2.6. Gravesham Stage 2 Green Belt Study Final Report, 2020	7
2.7. Kent Downs National Landscape Management Plan 2021-2026	7
2.8. Kent Downs National Landscape Viticulture Test & Trial Final Report June 2021	8
2.9. Landscape character assessment	8
2.10. Design Guidance	8
2.11. Summary	9
3. Landscape elements, qualities, functions and character	9
3.1. Methodology	9
3.2. General description of existing site and setting	9
3.3. Topography and soils	15
3.4. Kent Downs National Landscape (LCA 1A: West Kent Downs: Local Character Area - Luddesdown) and Green Belt	16
3.5. Vegetation and nature conservation	17
3.6. Perceptual qualities	18
3.7. Pattern of landscape and settlement	19
3.8. Access and recreation	20
3.9. Ecosystem services summary	21
4. Views	22
4.1. Methodology	22
4.2. Methodology for ZTV based on LIDAR data	23
4.3. General description of visibility	24
4.4. Specific viewpoints	24
4.5. View from site access on Gold Street (viewpoints 1 and 1a)	26
4.6. View from Gold Street (south) (viewpoints 2, 3 and 4)	28
4.7. View from Batt's Road (viewpoints 5 and 6)	31
4.8. View from Gold Street adjacent to the site (viewpoints 7, 9 and 10)	33
4.9. View from public footpath number NS190, north of Gold Street (viewpoint 8)	34
4.10. View from Sole Street / west end of Gold Street (viewpoints 11, 12 and 13)	37
4.11. View from public footpath number NS190 crossing the site (viewpoints 14 and 15)	40
4.12. View from public footpath number NS190 to the south of the site and the railway (viewpoints 16, 17, 18 and 19)	42
4.13. View from the southern edge of Cobham (viewpoints 20 and 21)	46
4.14. View from Henley Down, above Luddesdown (viewpoint 22)	48
4.15. Private views from surrounding properties	50
5. References	53

Figures List

Figure 1 - Site location.....4

Figure 2 - Extract from Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy - Policies Map Adopted September 2014: Map 10 (with site location added)
.....5

Figure 3 - Extract from Gravesham Green Belt Study 2018 (with site added)7

Figure 4 - Extract from Gravesham Green Belt Report Final 2020 (with site added)7

Figure 5 - Extract from Kent Downs National Landscape Landscape Character Assessment Update (with site location added)8

Figure 6 - Site description.....10

Figure 7 - Site photos11

Figure 8 - Site photos12

Figure 9 - Site photos13

Figure 10 - Site photos14

Figure 11 - Topography.....15

Figure 12 - Landscape Designations: Green Belt and Kent Downs National Landscape16

Figure 13 - Nature Conservation designations17

Figure 14 - Heritage Designations.....18

Figure 15 - Historic Maps (with site location added).....19

Figure 16 - Access and recreation.....20

Figure 17 - CPRE Interactive Map 'England's Light Pollution and Dark Skies (with site location added)21

Figure 18 - Summary of Landscape Receptor Sensitivity21

Figure 19 - Zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV)22

Figure 20 - Zone of theoretical visibility based on LIDAR data (ZTV 2)23

Figure 21 - Viewpoint location diagram - Close.....24

Figure 22 - Viewpoint location diagram - Distant.....25

Figure 23 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 1.....26

Figure 24 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 1a.....27

Figure 25 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 2.....28

Figure 26 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 3.....29

Figure 27 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 4.....30

Figure 28 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 5.....31

Figure 29 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 6.....32

Figure 30 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 733

Figure 31 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 8.....34

Figure 32 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 9.....35

Figure 33 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 10.....36

Figure 34 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 1137

Figure 35 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 12.....38

Figure 36 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 13.....39

Figure 37 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 1440

Figure 38 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 1541

Figure 39 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 1642

Figure 40 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 1743

Figure 41 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 1844

Figure 42 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 1945

Figure 43 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 2046

Figure 44 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 2147

Figure 45 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 2248

Figure 46 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Private views49

Figure 47 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Private views50

Figure 48 - Summary of Visual Receptor Sensitivity51

Appendices

- Appendix 1: LVE Methodology
- Appendix 2: Landscape Baseline Table

1. Introduction

1.1. Appointment

- 1.1.1. The terra firma Consultancy was appointed in August 2024 to provide landscape architectural services in support of the proposed development of land at Cobham House Vineyard, Gold Street. Our services involve the production of a Landscape and Visual Evidence and Impact Appraisal (LVE&IA) which, in light of the client brief, comprises:
- Developing an understanding of the site and its setting;
 - Defining what matters most about the landscape and visual aspects;
 - Incorporating these into the best possible development proposals which maximises opportunities and potentials; and
 - Minimising and mitigating harm.
- 1.1.2. For the purposes of the planning process the above work is presented in two volumes:
- Volume 1 Landscape and Visual Evidence (LVE) comprises our understanding of the site and its setting and the identification of what is important. This is critical in developing context-appropriate proposals and minimising harm and is the starting point for our work.
 - Volume 2 Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal will comprise the appraisal section of the final landscape report, completed once the final design is confirmed, and will be an impartial assessment of the landscape and visual effects of the final proposals.

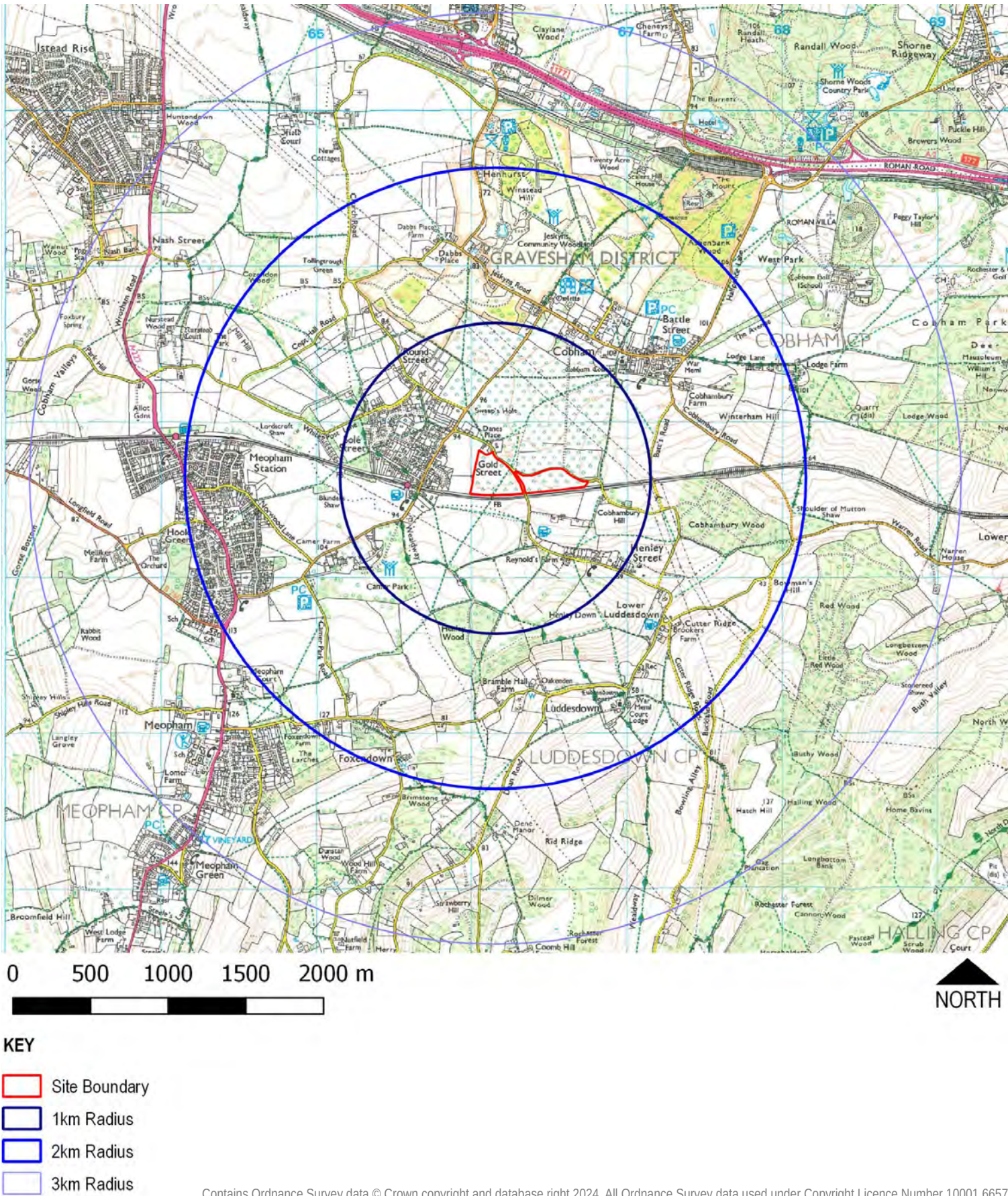
1.2. Report structure

- 1.2.1. Volume 1 is set out as below:
- Introduction; report structure; project brief; site location;
 - Policy framework; planning policies; landscape character assessments; planning evidence;
 - Landscape elements, qualities, functions and character: description and sensitivities;
 - Views: description and sensitivities;
 - Summary of emerging key design drivers; constraints and opportunities.
 - Appendix 1: Landscape and Visual Evidence methodology
 - Appendix 2: Landscape Baseline Table

1.3. Project brief

- 1.3.1. The brief for the design team is to prepare an application for a proposed; Erection of a winery building and hardstanding for Agricultural or Forestry use of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) - Schedule 2, Part 6
- 1.3.2. The brief for landscape architectural input is to assess the impact of the proposed winery building on landscape and views, particularly on the Kent Downs National Landscape as well as the openness of the Green Belt.

Figure 1 - Site location



1.4. Site location

- 1.4.1. The site forms part of Cobham House Vineyard, located between Gold Street and Batt's Road to the north, and the Chatham Main Line railway to the south. A number of small settlements surround the site, including: the village of Sole Street located immediately to the west; Cobham 1.0km to the northeast; Henley Street and Luddesdown, 0.75 and 1.5km to the southeast, and Hook Green and Meopham, 2.0 and 2.5km to the southwest.
- 1.4.2. The site is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape; the Metropolitan Green Belt; Gravesham Borough Council; and the county of Kent. Gravesend, is located on the southern bank of the River Thames, 7.0km to the north of the site, with development at Strood, Rochester and Chatham on the River Medway approximately 8.0km to the east. The A2 / M2 and High Speed 1 (Channel Tunnel Rail Link) run just over 2.0km to the north of the site at their closest.
- 1.4.3. Desktop research was carried out in August 2024, with the site visited and fieldwork undertaken in September 2024.

1.5. Site development history

- 1.5.1. This application comprises the fourth application for a proposed winery at Cobham House Vineyard, Gold Street. The first application was refused, the second application was approved but was then quashed following a judicial review challenge based upon procedural grounds, and the third, offering an alternative location which the applicant considered might be more acceptable to neighbours who had objected, was refused in May 2024 by the local authority as harmful to the landscape. This proposal returns the proposal to the original location, which Gravesham Council approved.

2. Policy and guidance framework

2.1. European Landscape Convention (2000) (ELC)

- The ELC sets out in the preamble the need for 'Acknowledging that the landscape is an important part of the quality of life for people everywhere: in urban areas and in the countryside, in degraded areas as well as in areas of high quality, in areas recognised as being of outstanding beauty as well as everyday areas'.
- The implication is that it is not just the designated areas, but the whole landscape that has many values and that all of them are formally recognised, but landscape matters to, and is valued by, people and provides a context for people's lives.
- This implication applies to all landscapes everywhere and in any condition – land, inland water, inter-tidal, marine, natural, rural, urban and peri-urban, outstanding, ordinary and degraded.

2.2. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF December 2023)

2.2.1. The NPPF confirms that the purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development and that there should be a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Planning policy-making and decision-making should take into account the roles and character of different areas and recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services. Paragraph 180 states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- 'protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)'
- 'recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland'
- 'minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures'

2.2.2. In paragraph 137 the NPPF states that:

'The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.'

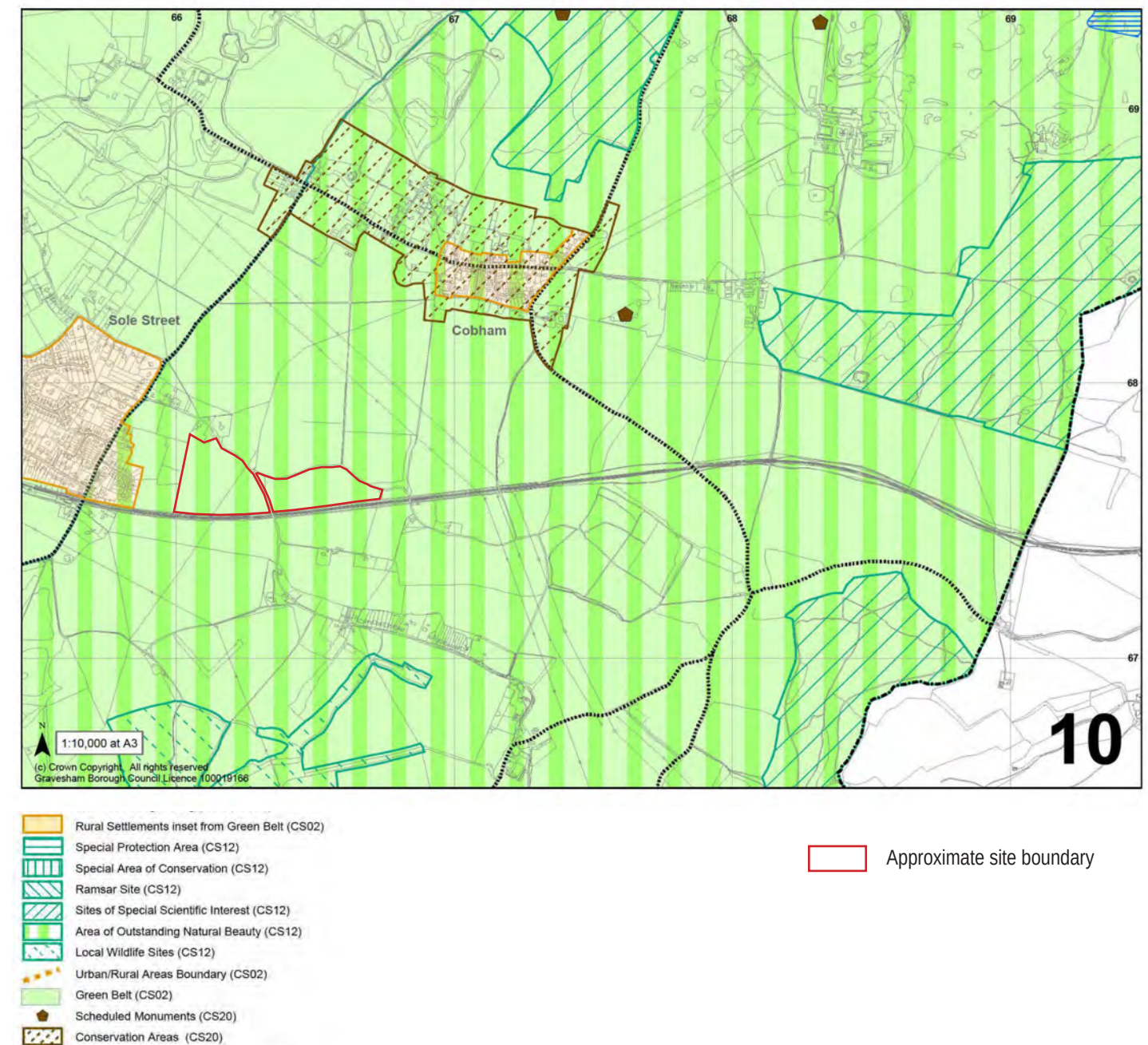
2.2.3. It goes on to note the five purposes of the Green Belt in paragraph 138:

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

2.2.4. The NPPF continues in paragraph 147, to state that:

'Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.'

Figure 2 - Extract from Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy - Policies Map Adopted September 2014: Map 10 (with site location added)



2.2.5. Paragraph 149 sets out the premise that, 'A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt.' Exceptions to this are listed below:

- buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- limited infilling in villages;
- limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and
- limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would: not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or, not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.

2.2.6. In paragraph 182 the NPPF states that:

'Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimize adverse impacts on the designated areas'.

2.3. Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

2.3.1. Policies in the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014, of relevance to the site are summarised below:

- Policy CS02: Scale and Distribution of Development states *'In the rural area, development will be supported within those rural settlements inset from the Green Belt and defined on the Policies Map. Development outside those settlements, including affordable housing and proposals to maintain and diversify the rural economy, will be supported where it is compatible with national policies for protecting the Green Belt and policies in this plan. The extent of the Green Belt is defined on the Policies Map'.*
- Policy CS11: Transport notes that *'The Council will seek improvements to walking and cycling facilities and networks in the Borough'.*
- Policy CS12: Green Infrastructure states that *'A multifunctional linked network of green spaces, footpaths, cycle route and wildlife stepping stones and corridors will be created, protected, enhanced and maintained.'* The policy continues to note *'The overall landscape character and valued landscapes will be conserved, restored and enhanced. The greatest weight will be given to the conservation and enhancement of the landscape and natural beauty of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting. Proposals will take account of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan, the Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment, and the Cluster Studies where relevant'.*
- Policy CS20: Heritage states that proposals will be supported which preserve and, where appropriate, enhance the significance of the Borough's heritage assets, their setting where it contributes to the significance of the asset and their interpretation and enjoyment, especially where these contribute to the distinct identity of the Borough. Heritage assets include the Borough's urban and rural conservation areas.

2.4. Gravesham Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study, 2016

2.4.1. Gravesham Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study provides an assessment of the landscape and visual sensitivities within defined assessment parcels around existing settlements and hamlets within Gravesham Borough. Judgements are made on the capacity of these assessment parcels to accommodate new built development, with respect to their landscape and visual sensitivities. Sensitivity and capacity judgements are made on a number of assessment criteria to determine whether development within parcels would be *'very likely to give rise to significant adverse landscape and/or visual effects'*, though to *'very unlikely to give rise to significant adverse landscape and/or visual effects'*. Development scenarios range from 'small' - 2 storey residential development; 'medium' - 3 - 4 storey residential / small scale commercial and industrial; and 'large' - large commercial/industrial units or hotels e.g. warehouses or office blocks.

2.4.2. The site is located within Landscape Parcel: SS2 - Sole Street northeast. Land use is described as making a strong contribution to local landscape character, with fruit trees often enclosed by formal pleached fruit trees creating a coherent landscape. It is noted that *'These are not traditional orchards, but fruit growing is recognised as a characteristic land use in the area.'* The settlement edge of Sole Street is described as having a wooded character, *'A large clump of trees to the north of Greenlands, the orchard remnants and roadside and garden trees combine to soften and break up the settlement edge, and give it a wooded character. The few dwellings along Gold Street are similarly set in well treed surroundings, and so do not detract from rural character.'* The landscape is noted as being *'sheltered and enclosed due to the screening effect of the rows of fruit trees and the pleached fruit trees that bound the orchards and lanes. There are some funnelled long views out, such as southwards to the rising slopes of the chalk downs, but no wider views other than across the grazed pastures between Gold Street and Sole Street where, as noted above, the settlement edge has a well-treed character.'*

2.4.3. Capacity for development within Landscape Parcel SS2 to the east of Sole Street is assessed as Medium - low for Small development scenario; and Low for Medium and Large development scenarios.

2.5. Gravesham Green Belt Study, 2018

2.5.1. The Gravesham Green Belt Study 2018 assesses the Green Belt in Gravesham against the national and local purposes of the Green Belt to inform the options for accommodating growth in the Borough, as well as detailed changes to the Green Belt boundaries and site allocations, if required.

2.5.2. The area has been subdivided into parcels. These vary in size but are noted as being strategic enough to inform the growth options (stage 1 consultation) and small enough to inform the site allocations and potential detailed changes to the Green Belt boundaries (stage 2 consultation). Parcel 16 - South of Cobham, encompasses land extending between Sole Street, the Chatham Main Line railway and Cobham, including the site, see Figure 3. The eastern part of the parcel is described as being undulating and open, with long views south towards the North Downs: the western part of the parcel consists of orchards which are largely screened by hedgerows along the roads. There are a limited number of buildings, along Gold Street and parts of The Street, as well as two sets of electricity pylons and lines running diagonally through the middle of the parcel (north west to south east).

2.5.3. Parcel 16 is assessed against the national purposes of the Green Belt as follows:

- Purpose 1: to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas - Minimal / No contribution;
- Purpose 2: to prevent neighbouring towns merging - Minimal / No contribution;
- Purpose 2a: to prevent other settlements in the Green Belt from merging - Significant contribution: The parcel plays a significant role in preventing the merging of settlements inset from the Green Belt. Land between Sole Street and Cobham is largely agricultural though there is some development between the two along The Street to the west of Cobham and around the junction of The Street and Sole Street;

Figure 3 - Extract from Gravesham Green Belt Study 2018 (with site added)

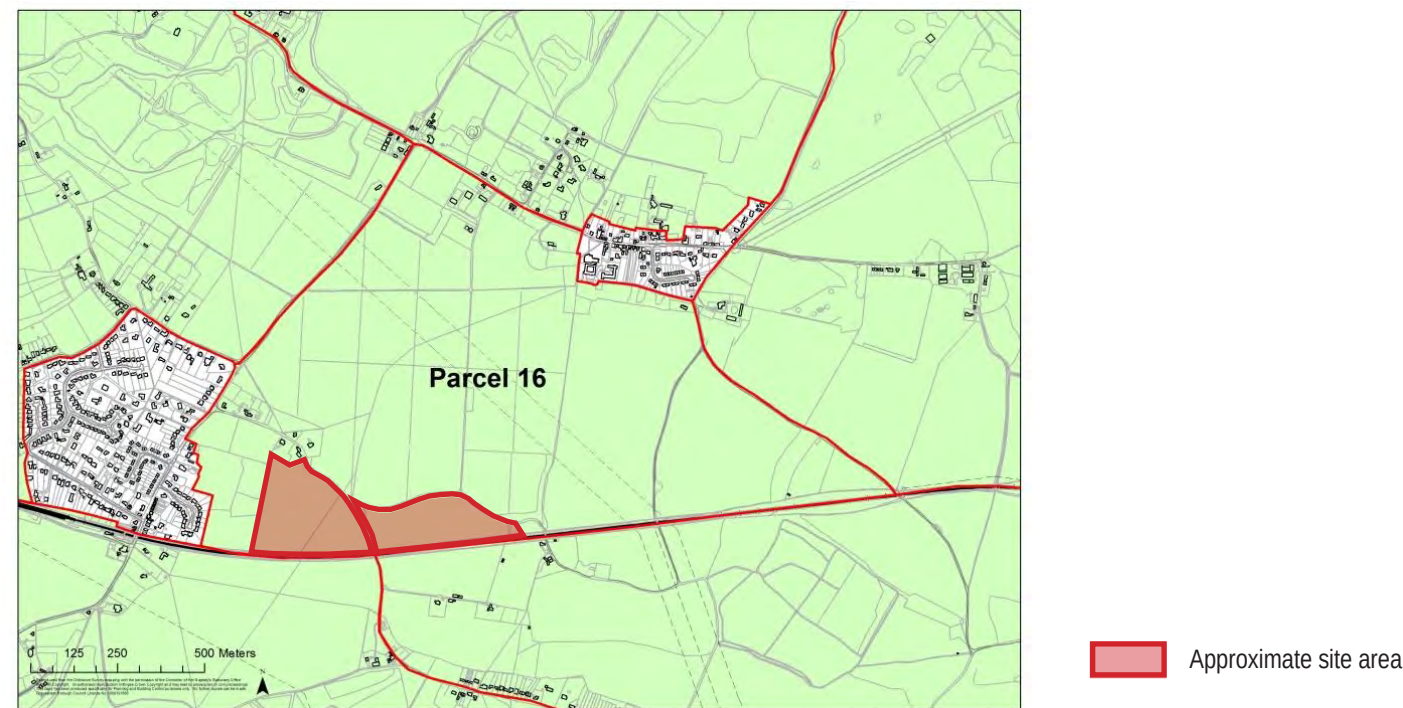
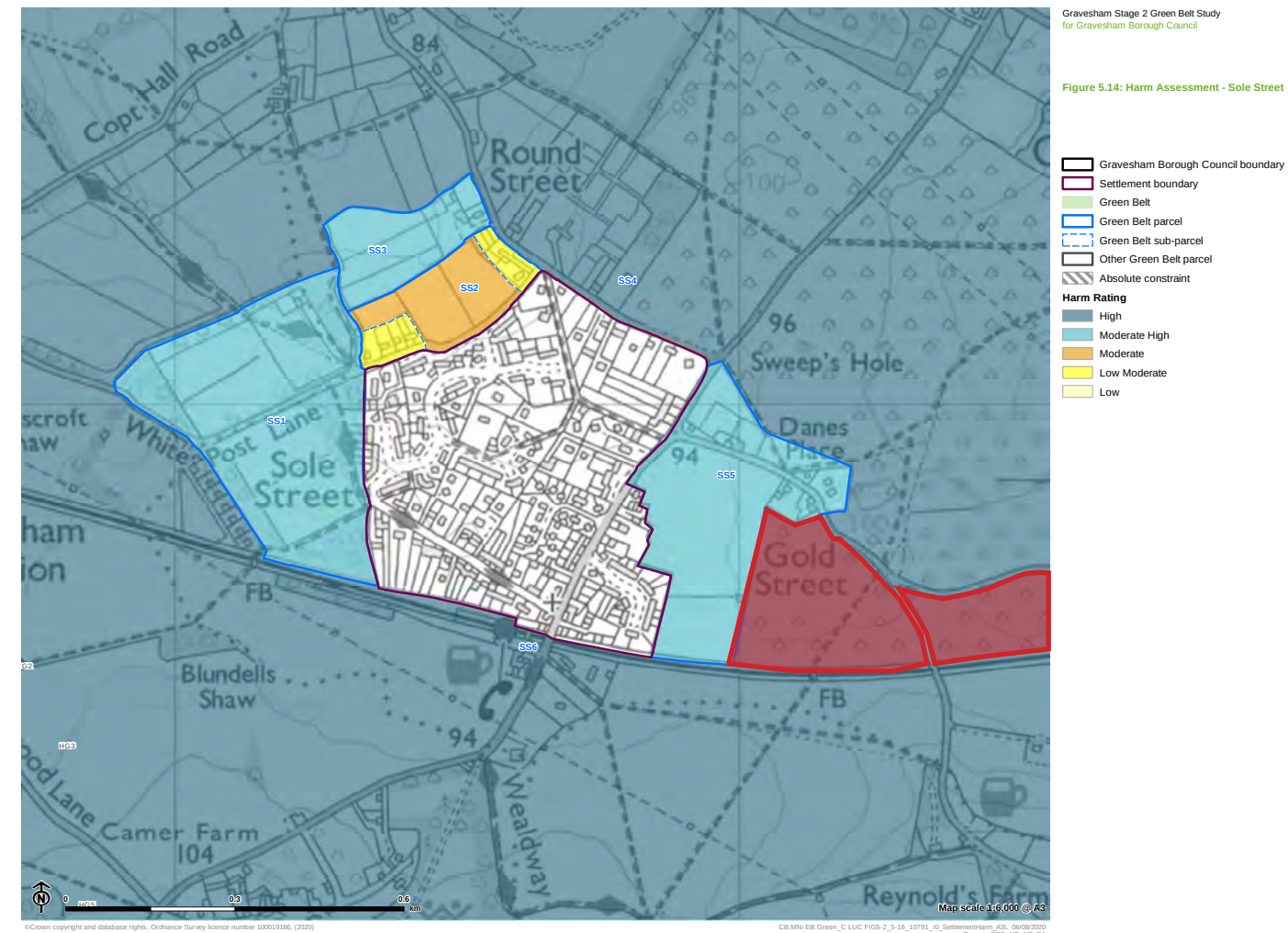


Figure 4 - Extract from Gravesham Green Belt Report Final 2020 (with site added)



- Purpose 3: to safeguard the countryside from encroachment - Significant contribution: 'The area primarily consists of farmed land and orchards. There is some development close to the boundaries of the settlements of Cobham and Sole Street but this is sporadic and predates the Green Belt designation. The pylons and electricity lines are other urbanising features within the parcel. The eastern part of the parcel has a more open aspect than the areas further west due to the nature of the farming and the presence/absence of roadside hedgerows. There has not been encroachment into the parcel from new development. As such, it significantly contributes towards this purpose.'

2.5.4. A summary of Parcel 16 notes:

'This parcel significantly contributes towards preventing the merging of settlements inset from the Green Belt and safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.

There are limited opportunities for development in the parcel without adversely affecting the strategic purposes of the Green Belt. To the east of the settlement of Sole Street, the triangle formed by Sole Street, Gold Street and the railway line would provide a more distinct boundary than the existing boundaries along the curtilages of dwellings and may provide an opportunity for development.'

2.6. Gravesham Stage 2 Green Belt Study Final Report, 2020

2.6.1. The Gravesham Stage 2 Green Belt Study Final Report 2020 assesses the potential harm to the purposes of the Green Belt (as set out in National Planning Policy Framework) of releasing land from the Green Belt in Gravesham for development.

2.6.2. An assessment of the potential harm to the Green Belt within Green Belt parcels surrounding Sole Street is illustrated at Figure 4. Parcel SS5, located between the eastern edge of Sole Street and the western site boundary and extending north to include properties at the western end of Gold Street is assessed as having a Moderate High Harm Rating. A Moderate-high harm rating is described as 'Release of land from the Green Belt that makes a relatively significant contribution to one of the Green Belt purposes and a less significant contribution to others, and would cause a minor weakening of the integrity of land that remains designated as Green Belt.' Similar Moderate High Harm Rating parcels (SS1 and SS2) are located to the west of Sole Street, with a Moderate / Low Moderate parcel SS2 adjoining the northwestern boundary of Sole Street.

2.7. Kent Downs National Landscape Management Plan 2021-2026

2.7.1. The goal of the now adopted Kent Downs National Landscape Management Plan 2021-2026 is to ensure that the natural beauty and special character of the landscape and vitality of the communities are recognised, valued, enhanced and strengthened well into the future. The rich landscape of the Kent Downs National Landscape, is made up of landscape components with special characteristics and qualities which together distinguish it as a landscape of national and international importance and underpin its significance and natural beauty. These components comprise: Dramatic landform and views; a distinctive landscape character; Biodiversity-rich habitats; Farmed landscape; Woodland and trees; A rich legacy of historic and cultural heritage; The Heritage Coasts; Geology and natural resources; and Tranquillity and remoteness.

2.7.2. Under 'Farmed landscape - special characteristics and qualities', the Management Plan states that there has been a recent rapid expansion of vineyard areas in the Kent Downs National Landscape. The plan notes that 'Studies (2020, 2021) prepared by the Kent Downs AONB Unit and South Downs National Park Authority into the impacts and opportunities arising from viticulture conducted in the Kent Downs, Surrey Hills AONBs and the South Downs National Park clearly demonstrate both the potential impacts of viticulture on the landscape and how to draw public good benefits from viticulture as well as other row fruit growing planted with vineyards since the publication of the last AONB Management Plan; subject to market conditions this is expected to continue to grow at a rapid rate and is creating a new character.'

2.7.3. The main issues, opportunities and threats identified in the Management under Farmed landscape include:

- Farm diversification and development activities, (which includes vineyards under alternative crops) can have important detracting impacts as well as benefits to the characteristics, qualities, and rural economy of the Kent Downs.

Identified aims of the Farmed landscape include 'Farm diversification and development activities conserve and strengthen landscape character, qualities and local distinctiveness.'

Figure 5 - Extract from Kent Downs National Landscape Landscape Character Assessment Update (with site location added)

Kent Downs AONB Landscape Character Assessment Update
West Kent Downs Landscape Character Area 1A

2.0 West Kent Downs

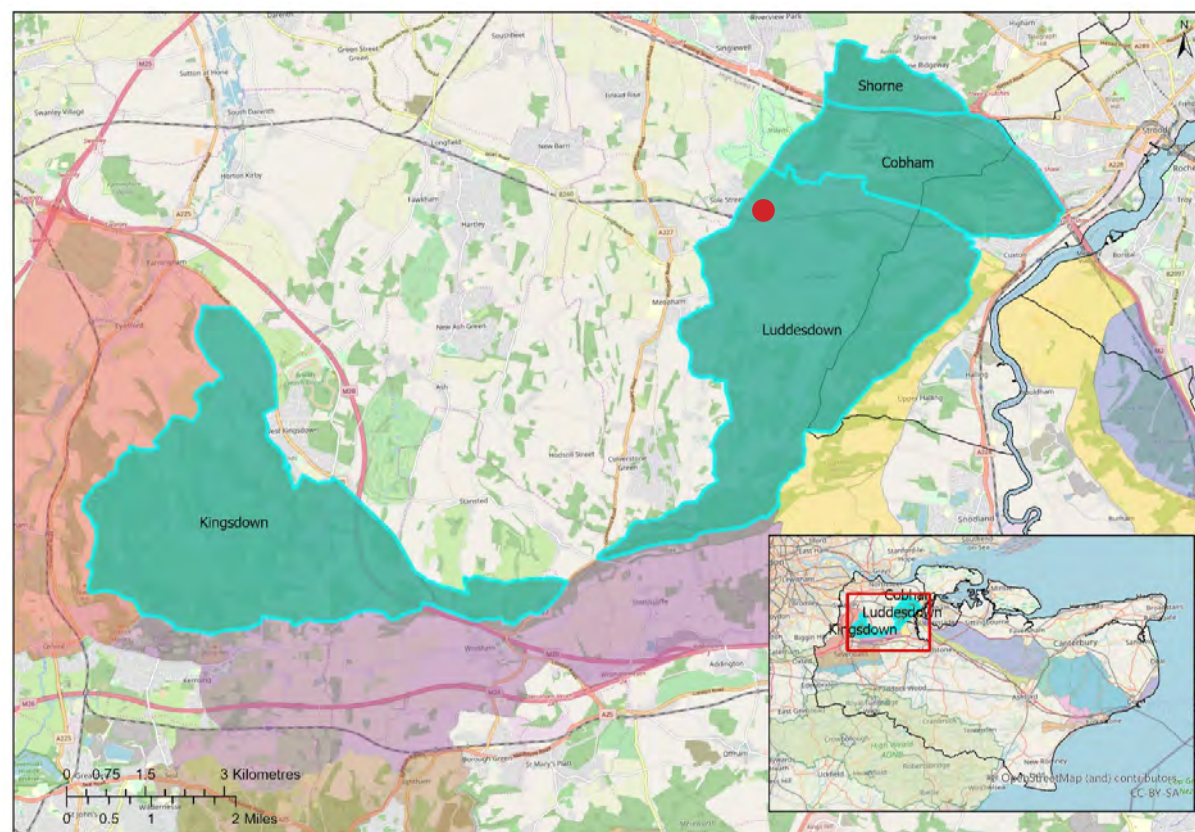
Landscape Character Area 1A

Landscape Character Type 1: Chalk Downs

Districts/ Boroughs: Sevenoaks; Tonbridge and Malling; Gravesham

Landscape/Countryside Partnerships: Medway Valley Countryside Partnership; Small part of Darent Valley

Location and Context: The West Kent Downs LCA is located in the west of the Kent Downs AONB, between the Darent Valley LCA (to the west) and the Medway Valley LCA (to the east). To the south is the Kemsing Scarp and Vale LCA. The northern boundary follows the AONB boundary, and includes Cobham Park and Shorne Wood.



Location map for West Kent Downs LCA, also showing Local Character Areas of Kingsdown, Luddesdown, Cobham and Shorne

● Approximate site location

2.8. Kent Downs National Landscape Viticulture Test & Trial Final Report June 2021

- 2.8.1. The Kent Downs National Landscape website states that the Kent Downs team is helping Defra design the new Environmental Land Management Scheme. Farmers and landowners were invited to participate and help co-design three Tests and Trials including Viticulture (grape-growing). The evidence and recommendations from these Tests and Trials were submitted to Defra in 2021 to help shape the way payments are made to farmers and landowners from 2024 onwards.
- 2.8.2. The Kent Downs National Landscape Viticulture Test & Trial Final Report assesses key Landscape Character Type impacts from viticulture and opportunities for mitigation, and it sets the context and background to evaluating where public goods could be enhanced.

2.9. Landscape character assessment

- 2.9.1. Relevant published landscape character assessments are listed below. These have been reviewed and the relevant key characteristics and guidelines taken into account in section 3 and the table in Appendix 2. The most recent of these is the Kent Downs National Landscape Landscape Character Assessment Update 2020, Revised and Published in 2023 which has a good level of detail and identifies valued characteristics as well as landscape sensitivities and landscape management recommendations. We have therefore focussed on the Kent Downs National Landscape LCA, adding other aspects from the national and county LCAs as well as our own observations, where they add to our understanding.

- National Character Assessment: NCA 119: North Downs;
- Kent Downs National Landscape Landscape Character Assessment Update 2020 Revised and Published 2023;
- Landscape Assessment of Kent October 2004.

2.10. Design Guidance

2.10.1. National Design Guide (2021):

The National Design Guide supports paragraph 139 of the NPPF which states that 'development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes.'

The NDG sets out the Government's priorities for well-designed places in the form of ten characteristics to be used to inform development proposals and their assessment by local planning authorities. The most relevant characteristics to LVE are:

2.10.2. Characteristic 1: Context: Enhances the surroundings

- 2.10.2.1. Para 38 describes this 'the location of the development and the attributes of its immediate, local and regional surroundings.' Para 39 states that 'An understanding of the context, history and the cultural characteristics of a site, neighbourhood and region influences the location, siting and design of new developments. It means they are well grounded in their locality and more likely to be acceptable to existing communities. Creating a positive sense of place helps to foster a sense of belonging and contributes to well-being, inclusion and community cohesion.'

2.10.2.2. Para 40 states that well-designed places are:

- based on a sound understanding of the features of the site and the surrounding context, using baseline studies as a starting point for design;
- integrated into their surroundings so they relate well to them;
- influenced by and influence their context positively; and
- responsive to local history, culture and heritage.

2.10.3. Characteristic 2: Identity: Attractive and distinctive

2.10.3.1. Para 50 describes this as 'the identity or character of a place comes from the way that buildings, streets and spaces, landscape and infrastructure combine together and how people experience them. It is not just about the buildings or how a place looks, but how it engages with all of the senses. Local character makes places distinctive. Well-designed, sustainable places with a strong identity give their users, occupiers and owners a sense of pride, helping to create and sustain communities and neighbourhoods.'

2.10.3.2. Para 51 states that Well-designed places, buildings and spaces:

- have a positive and coherent identity that everyone can identify with, including residents and local communities, so contributing towards health and well-being, inclusion and cohesion;
- have a character that suits the context, its history, how we live today and how we are likely to live in the future; and
- are visually attractive, to delight their occupants and other users.

2.10.4. Characteristic 5: Nature: Enhanced and optimised

2.10.4.1. Para 90 describes this as 'Nature contributes to the quality of a place, and to people's quality of life, and it is a critical component of well-designed places. Natural features are integrated into well-designed development. They include natural and designed landscapes, high quality public open spaces, street trees, and other trees, grass, planting and water.'

2.10.4.2. Para 91 states that well-designed places:

- integrate existing, and incorporate new natural features into a multifunctional network that supports quality of place, biodiversity and water management, and addresses climate change mitigation and resilience;
- prioritise nature so that diverse ecosystems can flourish to ensure a healthy natural environment that supports and enhances biodiversity;
- provide attractive open spaces in locations that are easy to access, with activities for all to enjoy, such as play, food production, recreation and sport, so as to encourage physical activity and promote health, well-being and social inclusion.

2.10.5. Kent Farmsteads Guidance

2.10.5.1. The Kent Farmsteads Guidance: Part 4 Character Area Statements sets out guidance on the character and significance of Kent farmsteads, for uses including individual applications and detailed design work. The site is located within NCA 119: North Kent Downs where it is noted that there is a '*predominantly dispersed settlement pattern of isolated farmsteads and hamlets*'. Descriptions of barns in this character area include '*typically of five bays and including aisled barns*', and '*Barns were aisled or more commonly provided with a lean-to shed to at least one side resulting in low eaves-lines, emphasising the mass of the roof over walling*'. It is noted that this area has one of the major concentrations of aisled barns in the country. Descriptions of the detailing of barns in the area includes '*Hipped and half-hipped clay tile roofs are a strong feature, to typically large-scale houses, barns and oast houses, and smaller scale cattle housing and other structures. Gabled roofs were more commonly used from the late 18th century.*'

2.10.6. Kent Downs National Landscape Farmstead Guidance (Kent Downs National Landscape Unit)

2.10.6.1. The Kent Downs National Landscape Unit produces a number of publications which provide guidance on conserving and enhancing the landscape. These include the Kent Downs Landscape Design Handbook; the Kent Downs National Landscape Farmstead Guidance, and the Kent Downs National Landscape Guidance on the selection and use of colour in development – Guidance.

2.10.6.2. The Kent Downs National Landscape Farmstead Guidance provides summary guidance on farmsteads in the Kent Downs National Landscape and is linked to generic guidance contained in the Kent Farmsteads Guidance. The site lies within the West Kent Downs Landscape Character Area which is noted as '*more difficult to cultivate for large-scale arable agriculture than the other southern English downlands, the result being the survival of large numbers of small-medium scale farmsteads into the 20th century.*' The guidance also notes a 'High density of dispersed settlement including medium to small scale farmsteads mostly sited along the existing road network' in the West Kent Downs Landscape Character Area.

2.11. Summary

2.11.1. The key implications of the above policies, assessments and guidance have been considered further in relation to landscape and visual aspects in the following sections 3 - 5.

3. Landscape elements, qualities, functions and character

3.1. Methodology

3.1.1. The landscape elements, qualities, functions, and character of the site and its wider area are described in the table set out in Appendix 2 and summarised below. These form the landscape baseline evidence which both informs the development proposals and, where likely to be affected by the development, form the landscape receptors against which the proposals are assessed. The sensitivity of landscape receptors is established by combining judgements on value with those on susceptibility to the type of change proposed, in line with the methodology set out in Appendix 1.

3.1.2. The site lies within the Kent Downs National Landscape and as such the value of the landscape is 'national' level. However, where the landscape is assessed as a number of separate components or landscape receptors, these may be attributed a lower value, for example vegetation, which is largely confined to recently planted vines within the site. The value, susceptibility and sensitivity of landscape receptors is set out in section 3, below.

3.2. General description of existing site and setting

3.2.1. The site comprises an area of vineyard located to the east of Sole Street. Formed by two parcels of land, to the east and west of Gold Street, the site extends between the Chatham Main Line railway to the south, Gold Street to the northwest and Batt's Road to the northeast, see Figure 6 Site Description. The western part of the site is accessed via a field gate at the junction of Gold Street and Batt's Road. Public footpath number NS109 crosses the western part of the site from Gold Street to the north to a footbridge crossing the railway to the south. Vegetation is largely confined to the vines planted within the site and boundary trees and hedgerows lining Gold Street. A small woodland copse is located within the eastern part of the site on land between Batt's Road and Gold Street, with a further wooded area in the eastern corner of the site. Native shrubs line the railway cutting on the southern boundary.

3.2.2. To the west the site adjoins pasture with remnant orchard trees, which extends to the eastern edge of the settlement of Sole Street. Houses on Greenlands and a number of properties east of Sole Street indent into this area of pasture. Gold Street forms the northernwestern boundary, with the residential properties, Hevers Cottage and Mulberry House adjoining the northwestern corner of the site. The southern and western side of Gold Street is largely lined by trees and / or hedgerows. Batt's Road forms the northeastern boundary, with a mix of orchards, open land, vineyards and arable farmland extending northeast towards the village of Cobham. The Chatham Main Line railway, in cutting along this stretch, forms the southern boundary with undulating arable farmland and woodland extending to the south. The hamlet of Henley Street lies in a valley, to the southeast of the site and the railway.

3.2.3. The site at Gold Street lies on south facing slopes to the east of Sole Street. Vineyards and orchards occupy large areas of the south facing slopes between Sole Street and Cobham, with extensive areas vineyards surrounding Luddesdown to the southeast. Although the importance of orchards in the context of local landscape character and as a characteristic element of the farmed landscape in the Kent Downs is noted in published landscape character assessments, the National Landscape Management Plan acknowledges the recent rapid expansion of vineyard areas in the Kent Downs.

3.2.4. The site lies within, and close to the boundary of, the Kent Downs National Landscape and within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

Figure 6 - Site description



Google Maps: Copyright 2024 Airbus, Maxar Technologies, Map data copyright 2024

Key

	Site boundary		Public right of way
	Site view		Significant linear vegetation in the vicinity of the site
	Gated entrance from Gold Street		Significant vegetation in the vicinity of the site

Figure 7 - Site photos



Site Photo A: View looking northwest across the site towards the northern site boundary on Gold Street

Continued below



Continued from above

Figure 8 - Site photos



Site Photo B: View looking south across the site from the northern site boundary

Continued below



Continued from above

Figure 9 - Site photos



Site Photo C: View looking southeast across the site from the northwestern corner of the vineyard

Continued below



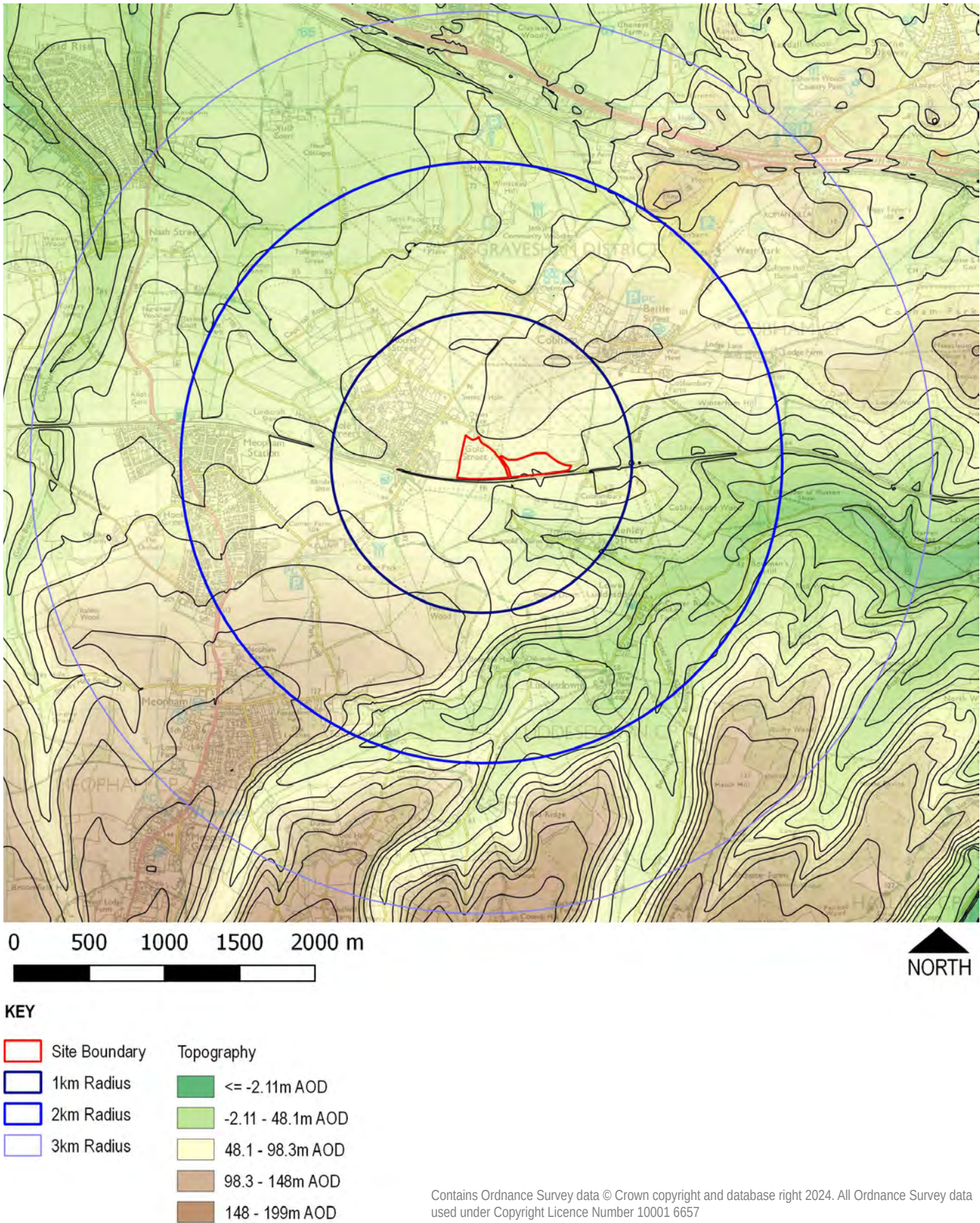
Continued from above

Figure 10 - Site photos



Site Photo D: View looking northwest along the northern site boundary from public footpath number NS109

Figure 11 - Topography

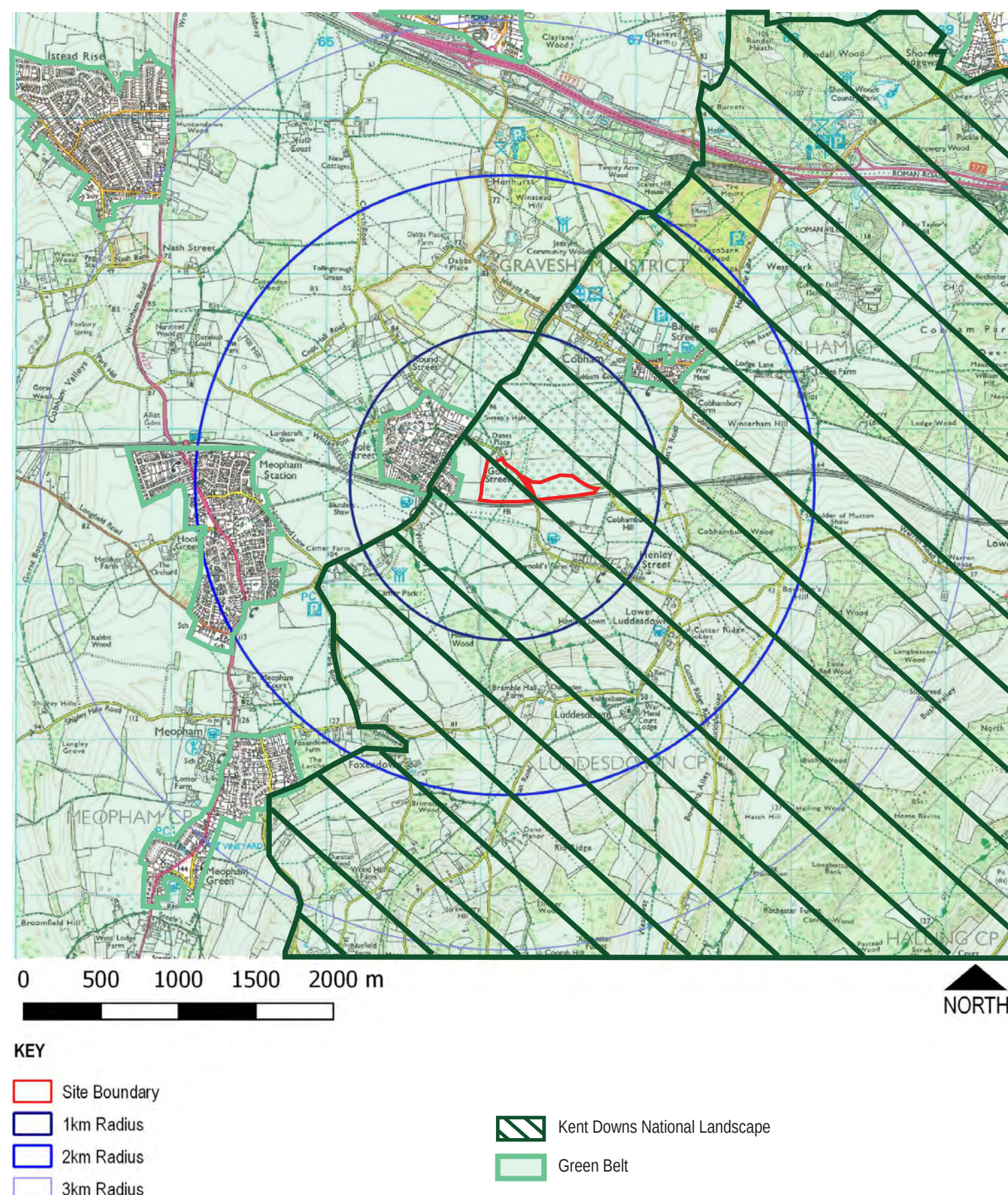


3.3. Topography and soils

Landscape Sensitivity of the Site (Topography and soils)

- 3.3.1. The site is judged to be of national value, where the topography, both within and surrounding the site, is typical of the Kent Downs National Landscape. The topography of the site and surrounding landscape is typical of LCA 1A West Kent Downs, (Local Character Area: Luddesdown), which is described as ‘a dip-slope landform of dry valleys running roughly north-south, interspersed with broad undulating ridges and plateaux’. This topography is particularly evident to the south of the site where a complex undulating landscape extends to the ridge of the North Downs. The site is situated on a south facing slope which falls to the Chatham Main Line railway on the southern boundary before rising towards Henley Down to the south. The aspect and soils of the site and environs are favourable for vines, with extensive areas of vineyards in the surrounding area, including Luddesdown to the south. The site falls from a high point of approximately 100 metres AOD on the northwestern boundary on Gold Street to approximately 92 metres AOD at the lowest point at the Chatham Main Line on the southern boundary. The ridge of the North Downs at around 200 metres AOD lies approximately 4km to the south of the site.
- 3.3.2. This value judgement is based on the following:
- Southerly aspect sloping site characteristic of the surrounding LCA 1A West Kent Downs, (Local Character Area: Luddesdown).
- 3.3.3. The susceptibility of the site to the type of development proposed is high; the site has no / limited ability to accommodate proposed type of change or type of development without transformational adverse consequences to the baseline situation or being incompatible with landscape planning policies and strategies.
- 3.3.4. This susceptibility judgement is based on the following:
- Proposed barn within an undulating landscape.
- 3.3.5. Combining the national value and the high susceptibility, the site would have a resultant high sensitivity for topography and soils.

Figure 12 - Landscape Designations: Green Belt and Kent Downs National Landscape



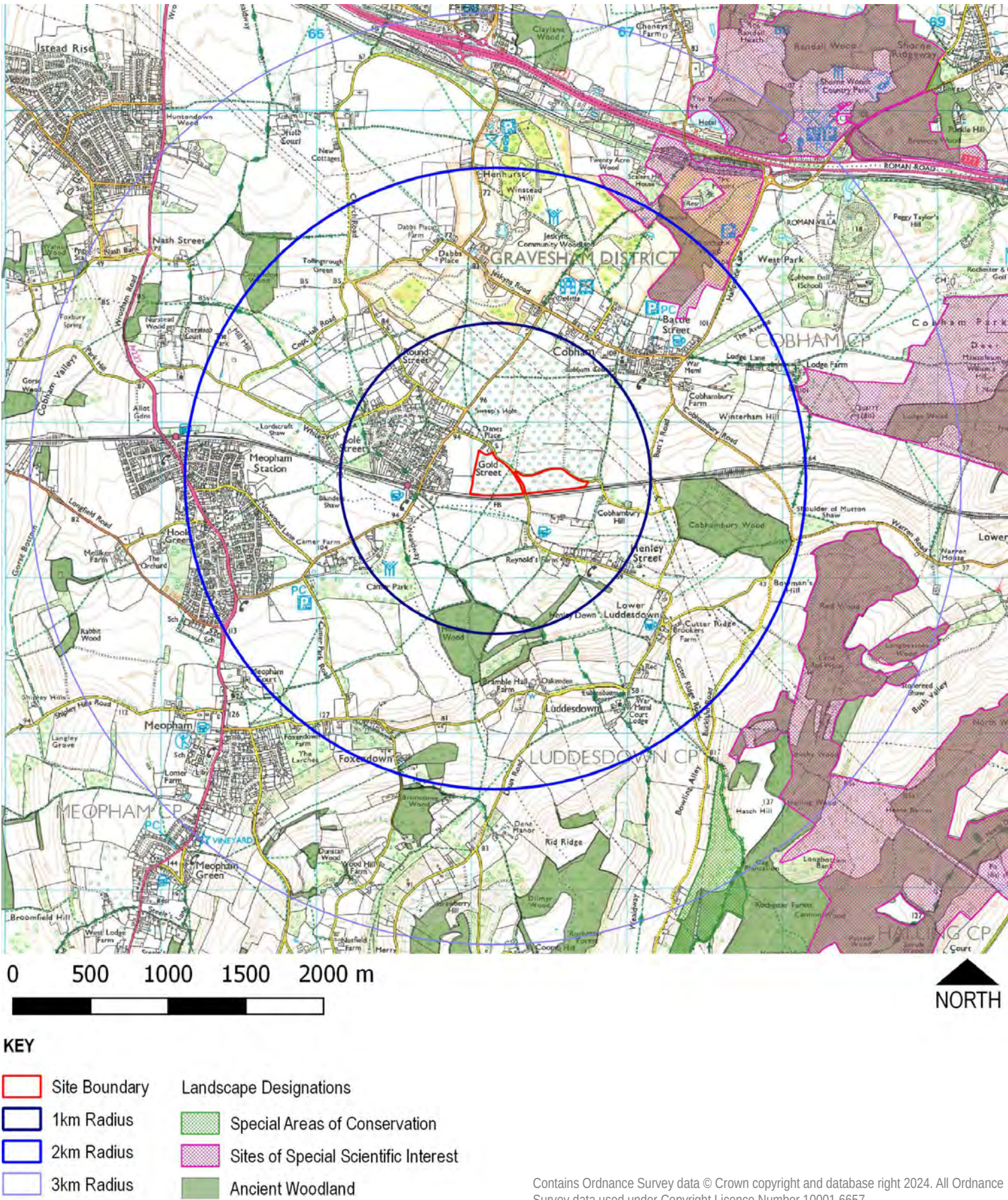
Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

3.4. Kent Downs National Landscape (LCA 1A: West Kent Downs: Local Character Area - Luddesdown) and Green Belt

Landscape Sensitivity of the Site (Landscape character: Kent Downs National Park and Green Belt)

- 3.4.1. The site is judged to be of national value, situated within the Kent Downs National Landscape and Green Belt. Located in the northwestern corner of the Local Character Area Luddesdown in LCA 1A: West Kent Downs (Kent Downs Landscape Character Assessment), the landscape to the south, and more locally to the east and north is typical of this character area. The Luddesdown local landscape area is described as a rich agricultural patchwork of rolling, valley-side pastures and undulating arable fields. Large areas of native mixed woodland are noted as dominating the skyline, and where there has been late twentieth century hedgerow removal in areas of arable cultivation, this has increased the importance of woodland in giving structure to the landscape. The lack of settlement is noted as being one of the area's characteristic features, with the isolated farms and occasional hamlets linked by a network of lanes which are generally narrow, quiet and lined with trees or hedges. It is noted that recent vineyard planting is generating a notable change to the agricultural patterns of the landscape.
- 3.4.2. The site lies within the Green Belt, to the east of the village of Sole Street, which is inset from the Green Belt. The Gravesham Green Belt Study, 2018 assessed Green Belt Parcel 16 (which contains the site) as having Minimal / No contribution to Green Belt purposes 1 and 2, to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas and to prevent neighbouring towns merging. For Purpose 2a, to prevent other settlements in the Green Belt from merging and purpose 3, to safeguard the countryside from encroachment, parcel 16 is assessed as making a Significant Contribution. In a summary of parcel 16 it is noted 'There are limited opportunities for development in the parcel without adversely affecting the strategic purposes of the Green Belt. To the east of the settlement of Sole Street, the triangle formed by Sole Street, Gold Street and the railway line would provide a more distinct boundary than the existing boundaries along the curtilages of dwellings and may provide an opportunity for development.' The Gravesham Stage 2 Green Belt Study Final Report 2020 assessed parcel SS5, located between the eastern edge of Sole Street and the western site boundary as having a Moderate High Harm Rating (a release of land from the Green Belt that would cause a minor weakening of the integrity of land that remains designated as Green Belt).
- 3.4.3. This value judgement is based on the following:
- Site is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape, with features typical of the Luddesdown Local Character Area: Vineyards within irregular shaped fields on the south facing valley side; Delineated by narrow, rural lanes often lined by hedgerows / trees / small woodland; Views to undulating arable downland and wooded horizon within the National Landscape to the south;
 - Green Belt: the site lies within a Green Belt parcel assessed as making a Significant Contribution to Green Belt purposes: 2a - to prevent other settlements in the Green Belt from merging, and 3 - to safeguard the countryside from encroachment. The site adjoins a Green Belt parcel assessed as having a Moderate High Harm Rating (where a release of land from the Green Belt would cause a minor weakening of the integrity of land that remains designated as Green Belt).
- 3.4.4. The susceptibility of the site to the type of development proposed is high; the site has no or limited ability to accommodate proposed type of change or type of development without undue consequences to the baseline situation or landscape planning policies and strategies.

Figure 13 - Nature Conservation designations



- 3.4.5. This susceptibility judgement is based on the following:
- Development on the site would have an effect on landscape character within LCA 1A: West Kent Downs: Luddesdown Local Character Area (where there are typically isolated farms and narrow lanes lined by vegetation / irregular shaped field boundaries / public views within the National Landscape;
 - The type of development on the site would have a limited effect on openness within the Green Belt to the east of Sole Street: the proposed agricultural building will be located adjacent to existing properties and mature vegetation on Gold Street, and would be well enclosed.

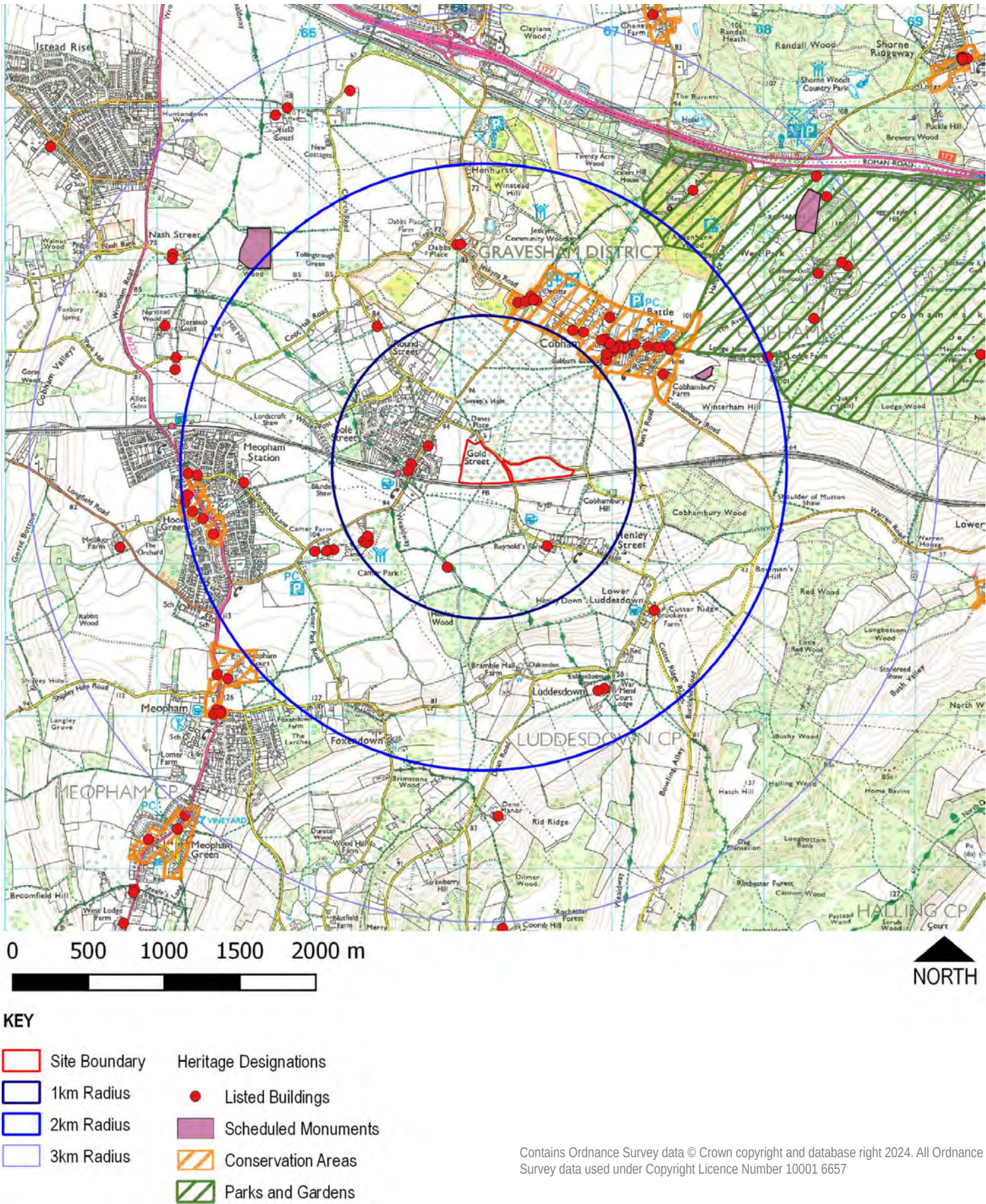
3.4.6. Combining the national value and the high susceptibility, the site would have a resultant high sensitivity for landscape character and Green Belt.

3.5. Vegetation and nature conservation

Landscape Sensitivity of the Site (Vegetation)

- 3.5.1. The site is judged to be of community value, with vegetation within the site comprising; commercially grown vines; the woodland copse at the junction of Gold Street and Batt's Road; a small areas of trees at the eastern corner of the site adjacent to Batt's Road; and roadside vegetation on Gold Street. Vines within the site are considered to be of relatively low value. The small woodland copse on the junction of Gold Street and Batt's Road, along with vegetation on Gold Street forms a distinctive feature in the landscape, and as such is considered to have a higher value.
- 3.5.2. This value judgement is based on the following:
- Vegetation within the centre of the site comprises the commercially grown vines;
 - The small woodland copse on the junction of Gold Street and Batt's Road, along with boundary vegetation following Gold Street, forms a distinctive feature in the landscape, and as such is considered to have a higher value.
 - Off-site mature trees on the northwestern site boundary / within the grounds of adjoining residential properties form a distinctive feature in the landscape, and are also considered to have a higher value.
- 3.5.3. The susceptibility of the site to the type of development proposed is low; the site is able to accommodate proposed type of change or type of development without undue consequences to the baseline situation or landscape planning policies and strategies.
- 3.5.4. This susceptibility judgement is based on the following:
- Development would only affect a recently planted area of vines, and is likely to have limited or no impact on surrounding boundary vegetation on Gold Street, where there is an existing vehicular site access;
 - Development would not affect the higher value vegetation in the small woodland copse opposite the site access;
 - There is the potential for additional native tree and shrub planting, both within the site and on existing boundaries.
- 3.5.5. Combining the community value and the low susceptibility, the site would have a resultant medium to low sensitivity for vegetation.

Figure 14 - Heritage Designations

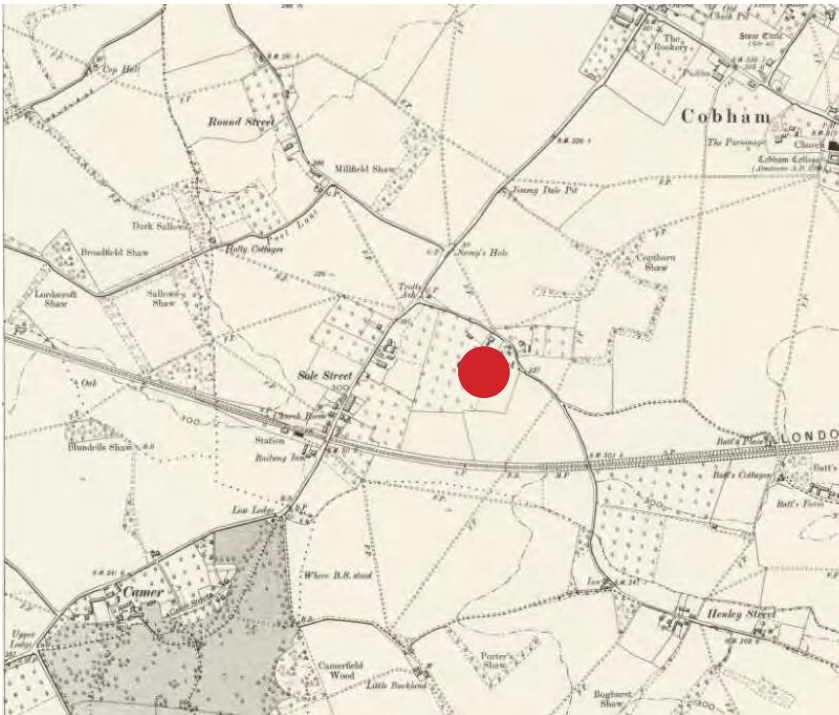


3.6. Perceptual qualities

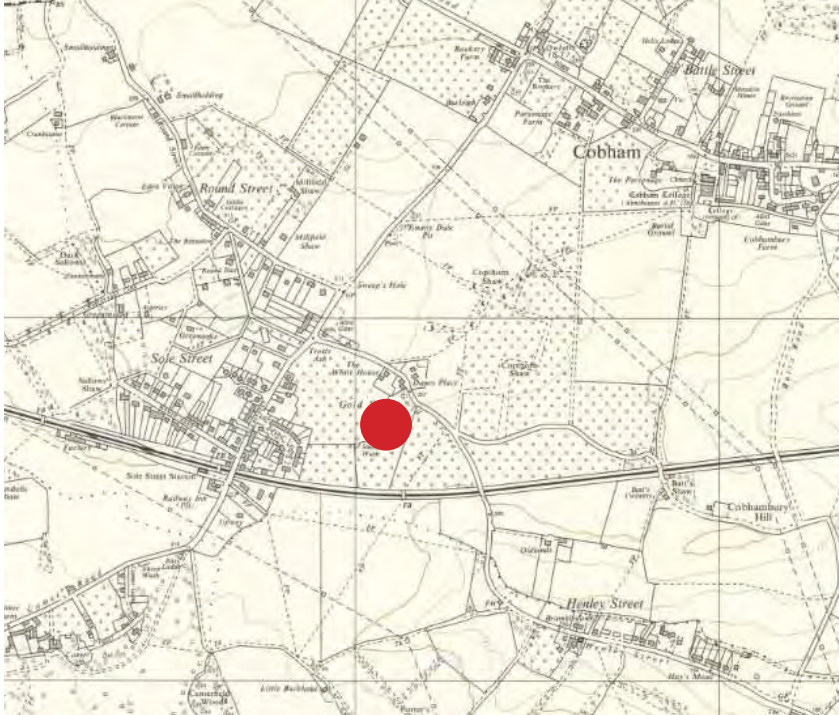
Landscape Sensitivity of the Site (Perceptual qualities)

- 3.6.1. The site is judged to be of local authority value, as set out in the LVE Methodology at Appendix 1. The site has relatively high tranquillity with surrounding undulating farmland and wooded horizons within the Kent Downs National Landscape to the north, east and south. A mix of open arable land, modern orchards (rows of dwarf fruit trees), and vineyards are found on the surrounding downland, and the site is generally well enclosed from the north by mature trees and vegetation following Gold Street.
- 3.6.2. However, although the site is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape, it is considered that there are a number of detractors which reduce the value of the site to a level below national, (ie. local authority value) for perceptual qualities. These include high voltage power lines crossing the landscape to the north and south of the site, the Chatham Main Line railway on the southern boundary (although this is in cutting at this point), and audible air traffic / agricultural machinery.
- 3.6.3. The CPRE Map 'England's Light Pollution and Dark Skies at Figure 16 shows the site has 'brighter' night skies associated with development at Sole Street and Hook Green. 'Brightest' night skies follow the A2 and development at Gravesend and Rochester to the north. Darker night skies are found to the south of the site extending towards the North Downs and Luddesdown. Although there are temporary storage buildings within the site, there is currently no lighting within the site.
- 3.6.4. Cobham Conservation Area and the Grade II* Cobham Hall registered park and garden are located around 1.0 and 1.4km respectively, to the northeast of the location of the proposed building within the site. However, there is limited intervisibility with the site, largely due to mature vegetation on the southern boundary of Cobham village. There is no intervisibility between the site and the Hook Green and Meopham Conservation Areas to the southwest of the site. Of the small number of listed buildings in Sole Street, there may be intervisibility with the site from the Grade II listed Sole Street House and grounds, just under 200metres to the west of the site boundary.
- 3.6.5. This value judgement is based on the following:
- Relatively high tranquillity despite brighter night skies in the vicinity of the site;
 - There are some detractors, including high voltage power lines crossing the surrounding landscape, Chatham Main Line railway on the southern site boundary and audible air traffic / agricultural machinery;
 - Views to surrounding undulating farmland and wooded horizons within the Kent Downs National Landscape to the south and east.
- 3.6.6. The susceptibility of the site to the type of development proposed is medium; the site has some ability to accommodate proposed type of change or type of development without undue consequences to the baseline situation or landscape planning policies and strategies.
- 3.6.7. This susceptibility judgement is based on the following:
- Development would be associated with existing vineyard / agricultural activity on the site and immediately surrounding the site, and is in line with increasing vineyards in the surrounding landscape;
 - Limited intervisibility with surrounding historical features.
- 3.6.8. Combining the local authority value and the medium susceptibility, the site would have a resultant medium to high sensitivity for perceptual qualities.

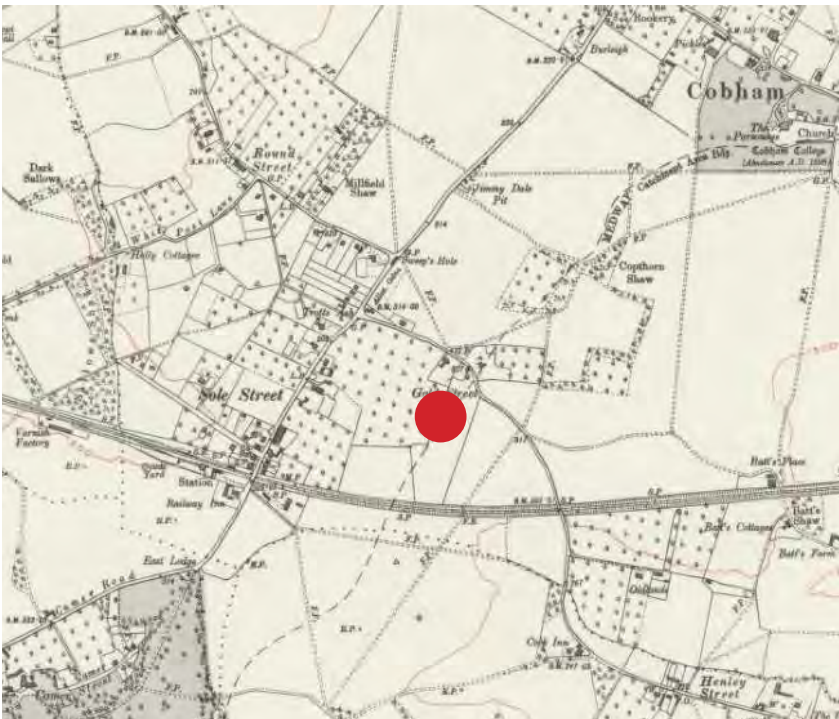
Figure 15 - Historic Maps (with site location added)



Map 1: Kent Sheet XVIII.NE: Revised: 1895, Published: 1898



Map 3: TQ66NE - A: Revised: 1960 to 1964, Published: 1966



Map 2: Kent Sheet XVIII.NE: Revised: 1931, Published: 1933



Map 4: OS Explorer Map number 163: 2015

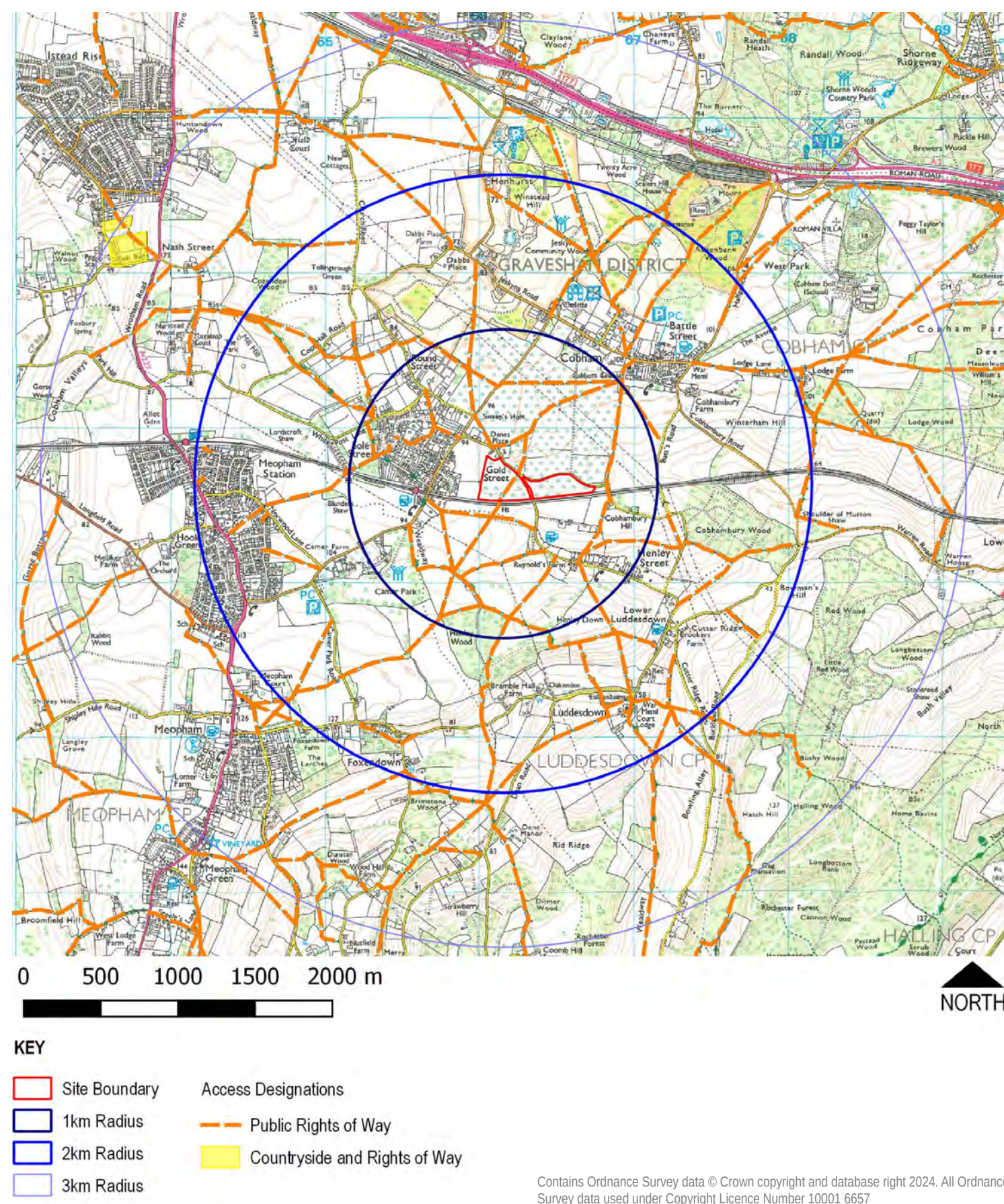
 Approximate location of proposed building on the site

3.7. Pattern of landscape and settlement

Landscape Sensitivity of the Site (Landscape and settlement)

- 3.7.1. The site is judged to be of community value. The site has recently been converted from orchards to vineyards in line with a recent increase in new / non traditional crops such as viticulture in the Kent Downs. Settlement surrounding the site is typical of LCA 1A West Kent Downs: Luddesdown, which describes development limited to occasional hamlets and scattered and isolated farmsteads linked by a network of narrow and winding lanes.
- 3.7.2. The site lies within, but close to the boundary of the Kent Downs National Landscape, whilst the settlement of Sole Street to the east lies outside of the designation. Much of the development in Sole Street is as a result of the railway line, and there are few listed buildings. The public footpath crossing the site is shown on an OS map of 1898, (see Figure 14), as is the railway line forming the southern site boundary, along with Gold Street and Batt's Road. All these linear features currently follow the same alignment as on the 1898 map. Residential properties, including Danes Place, are shown at the northern corner of the site, with Sole Street confined to a cluster of buildings around the railway station and along Sole Street to the north. Orchards are shown in the northern part of the site and extending west to Sole Street. By the 1960's OS mapping shows an increase in orchards now covering the extent of the site and land to the north towards Cobham. Development within Sole Street has increased, extending north and west of the station, including Greenlands to the east of Sole Street. Pylons are shown crossing land surrounding Sole Street by the 1960's. Although the North Downs has retained areas of fruit growing, more recently there has been an increase in new / non traditional crops such as viticulture. The site has recently been converted from orchards to vineyard, with remnant orchard trees evident within an area of pasture adjoining the western site boundary.
- 3.7.3. This value judgement is based on the following:
- There is limited historical value within the site itself, although the public footpath crossing the vineyard / site follows a historical route, as do Gold Street and Batt's Road on the northern site boundary;
 - Orchards on site converted to vineyards, in line with recent increase in vineyards in Kent Downs.
- 3.7.4. The susceptibility of the site to the type of development proposed is medium to low; the site is able / has some ability to accommodate proposed type of change or type of development without transformational adverse consequences to the baseline situation or landscape planning policies and strategies.
- 3.7.5. This susceptibility judgement is based on the following:
- Development would reflect the existing pattern of scattered / isolated farms within the surrounding landscape, and typical building styles of traditional agricultural barns in the area.
- 3.7.6. Combining the community value and the medium to low susceptibility, the site would have a resultant medium sensitivity for pattern of landscape and settlement.

Figure 16 - Access and recreation

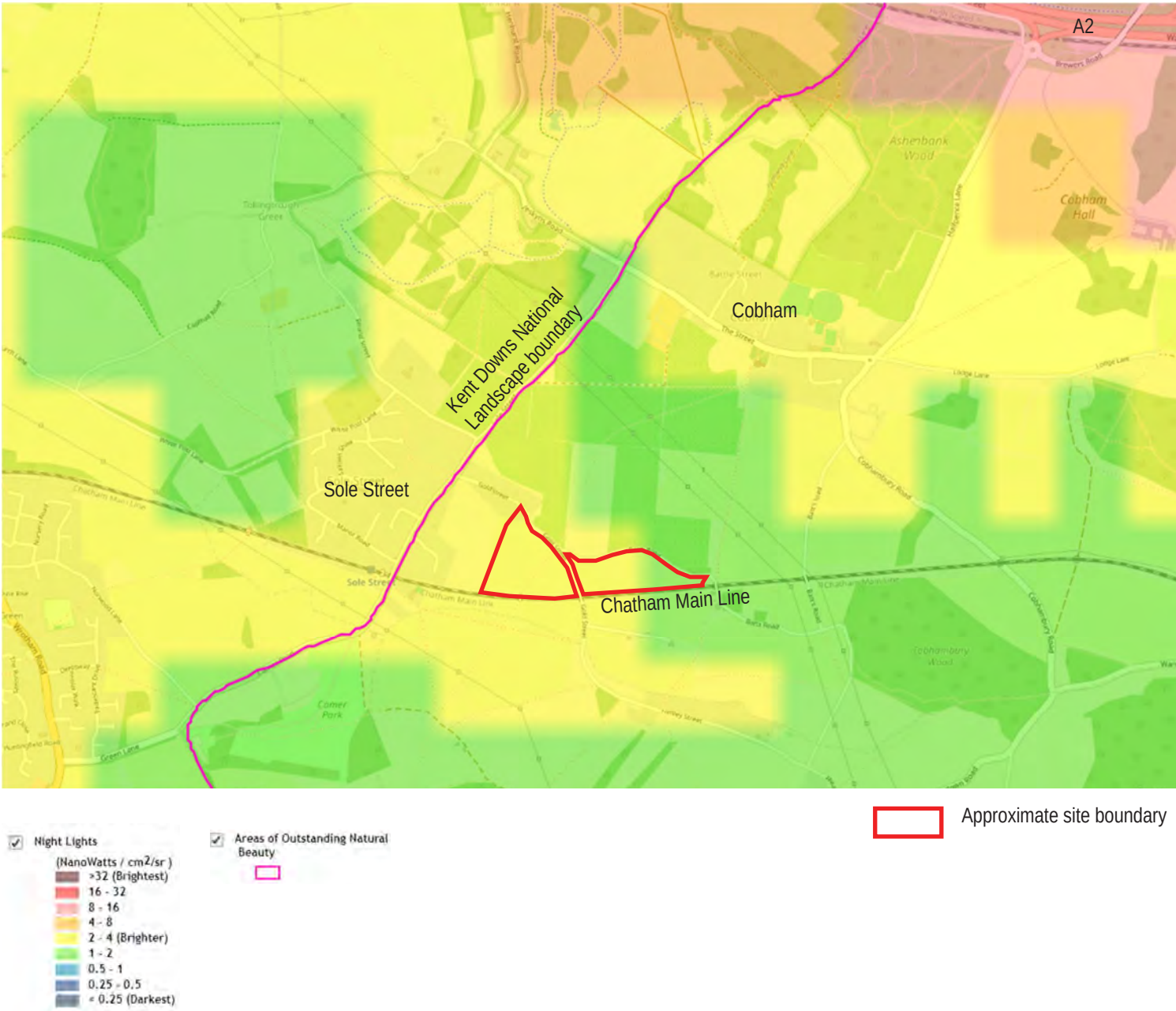


3.8. Access and recreation

Landscape Sensitivity of the Site (Access and recreation)

- 3.8.1. The site and immediate surroundings are judged to be of national value. Although there is no public access to much of the site, public footpath number NS109 crosses the vineyard, from Gold Street on the northern boundary to the footbridge over the Chatham Main Line railway to the south. The footpath crossing the vineyard provides links to an extensive network of public rights of way in the surrounding area, and within the Kent Downs National Landscape. The Wealdway long distance route passes 500 metres to the south of the site, linking Gravesend to the North Downs Way National Trail.
- 3.8.2. This value judgement is based on the following:
- Although there is no public access to much of the site, public footpath number NS109 crosses the vineyard;
 - Public footpath number NS109 provides links via the site to an extensive network of public rights of way in the surrounding area, including Cobham, the Wealdway, Camer Park Country Park and Meopham.
- 3.8.3. The susceptibility of the site to the type of development proposed is medium to low; the site is able to / has some ability to accommodate proposed type of change or type of development without transformational adverse consequences to the baseline situation or being incompatible with landscape planning policies and strategies.
- 3.8.4. This susceptibility judgement is based on the following:
- Development would not affect the existing alignment of public footpath number NS109 as it crosses the site;
 - Development would have limited impact on this footpath; the proposed building would be sited approximately 150 to 225 metres from the public footpath.
- 3.8.5. Combining the national value and the medium to low susceptibility, the site would have a resultant medium sensitivity for access and recreation.

Figure 17 - CPRE Interactive Map ‘England’s Light Pollution and Dark Skies
(with site location added)



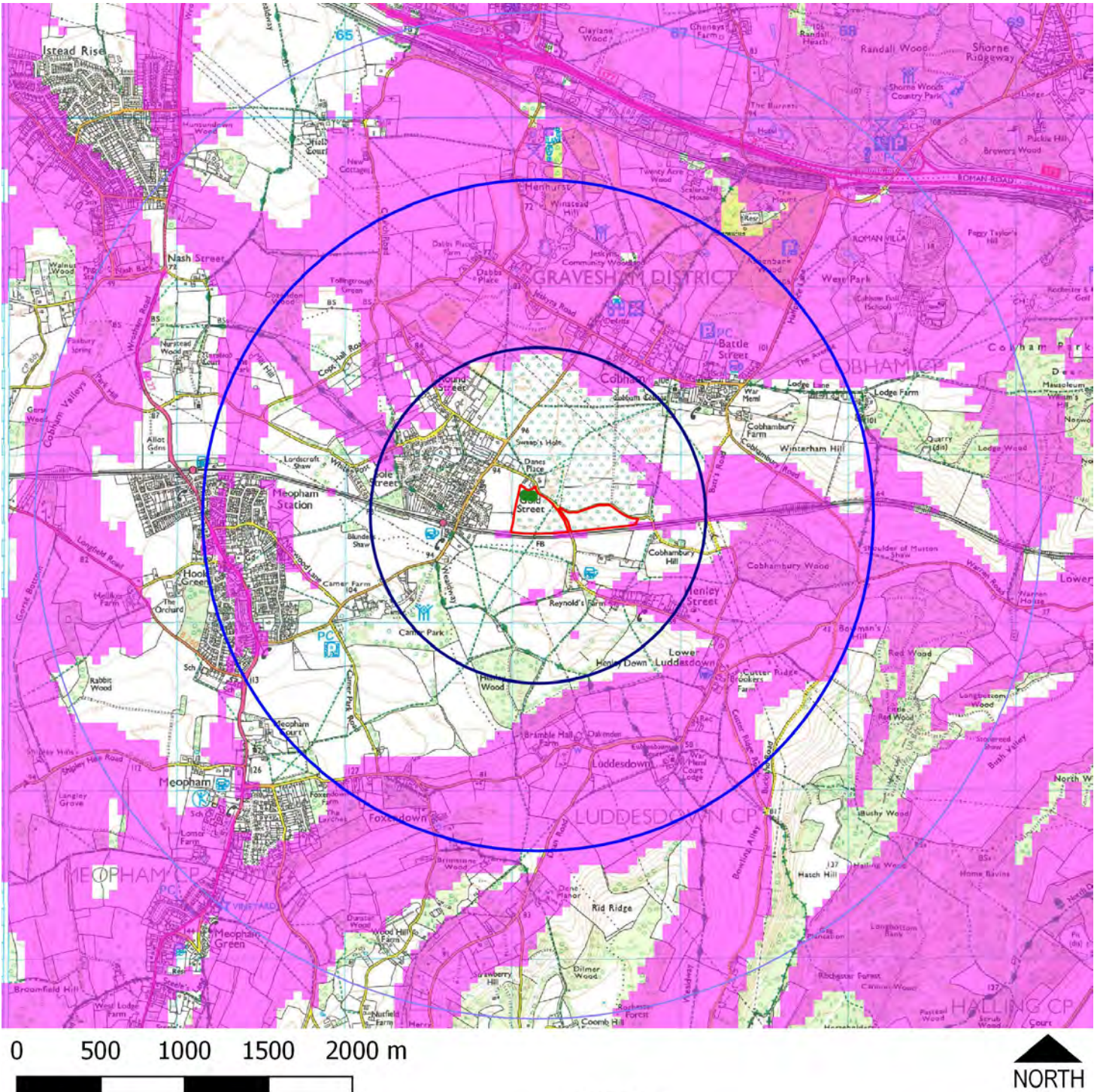
3.9. Ecosystem services summary

- 3.9.1. The site provides a contribution to ecosystem services in the following ways:
- Provisioning services: Food production - vineyard and wine production;
 - Supporting services: Biodiversity - boundary vegetation including trees and hedgerows along Gold Street; small woodland copse at the junction of Gold Street and Batt's Lane; the small wooded area at the eastern corner of the site on Batt's Road; commercially grown vines;
 - Regulating services: Water flow – Relating to air and water quality and erosion, with the presence of vegetation as above;
 - Cultural services: Tranquillity - rural, agricultural setting, limited views to development in the surrounding landscape; Recreational - public footpath NS109 crosses the western part of the vineyard, linking Gold Street / Cobham, to Meopham.

Figure 18 - Summary of Landscape Receptor Sensitivity

Landscape receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Topography and soils	National	High	High
Kent Downs National Park and Green Belt	National	High	High
Vegetation and nature conservation	Community	Low	Medium to Low
Perceptual qualities	Local Authority	Medium	Medium to High
Pattern of landscape and settlement	Community	Medium to Low	Medium
Access and recreation	National	Medium to Low	Medium

Figure 19 - Zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV)



KEY	
 Site Boundary	ZTV - Topography
 1km Radius	 Development unlikely to be visible
 2km Radius	 Development potentially visible
 3km Radius	

IMPORTANT

This computer generated model is based on a 'bare earth' scenario, discounting the vegetation in the area. The ZTV diagram is theoretical, for use only as a starting point to inform potential areas to be tested in the field. As such, the ZTV is potentially misleading and actual visibility may be proven to be considerably less through fieldwork.

This diagram was created with a building ridge height of 9.3m, and a viewer height of 1.65m.

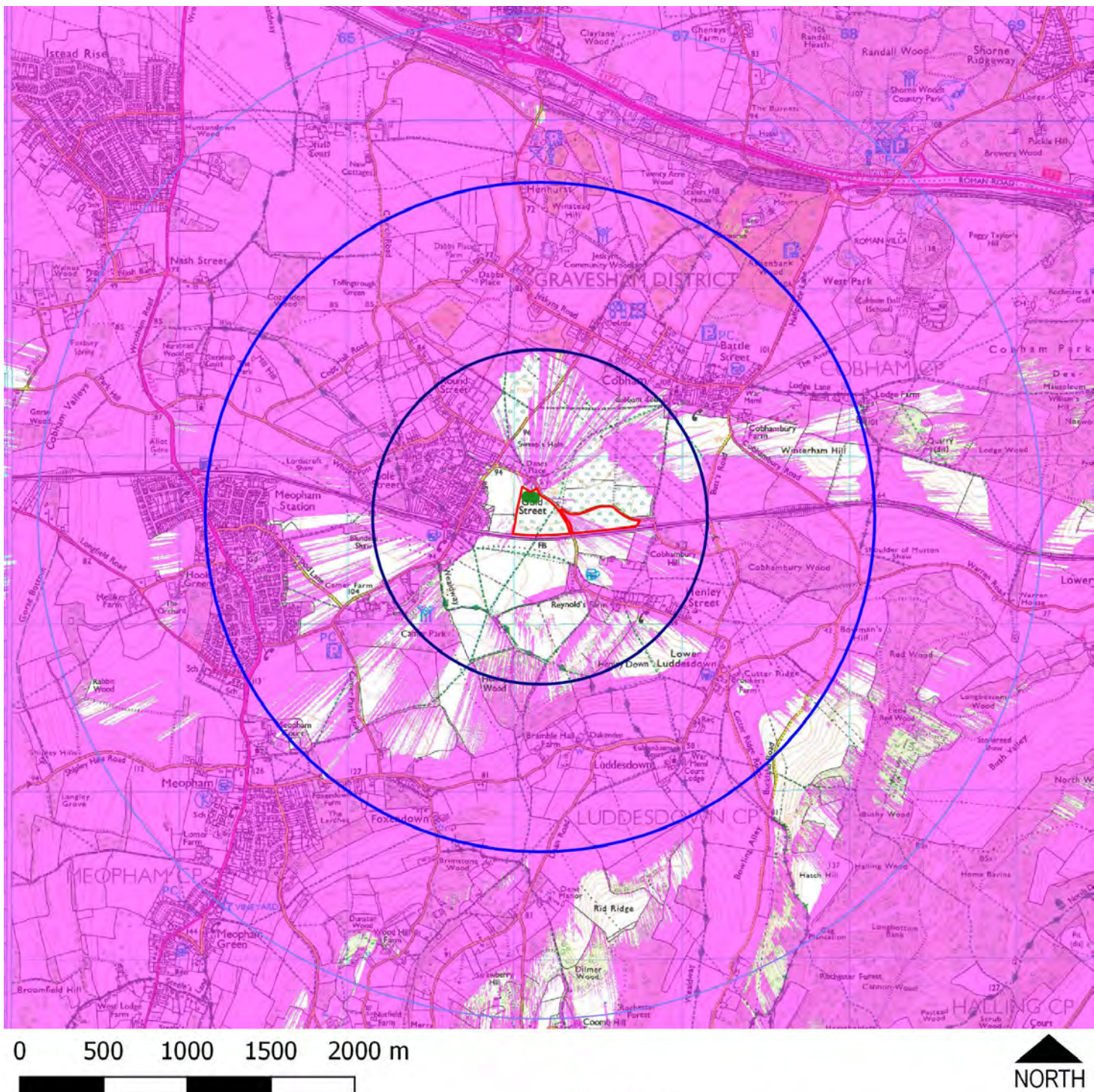
Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

4. Views

4.1. Methodology

- 4.1.1. The visibility of the site is influenced by the topography of the surrounding area and the presence of features such as buildings and vegetation. The topography of the area is illustrated in Figure 11 and this is the basis for the diagram showing the zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) Figure 19. The ZTV is used to guide fieldwork, ruling out areas where the likely proposed development would be screened by landform. The visual study zone has been limited to 3 km, beyond which views are unlikely to be affected. Informed by the ZTV and prior to undertaking viewpoint photography in the wider landscape, the site was visited in order to assess what is visible from eye level including likely views from private houses, see Figures 42 and 43.
- 4.1.2. Figures 19 and 20 indicate the location of photographic viewpoints. Figures 23 to 45 set out photographs annotated to describe the distance of the viewpoint from the site, the direction of the view, the nature of the viewpoint, type and relative numbers of visual receptors and the visibility of the existing site. Views of a similar nature which are likely to be affected by the development, are grouped together below and an overall assessment of the sensitivity of the view receptors is made by combining judgements on value with those on susceptibility to the type of change proposed, in line with the methodology set out in Appendix 1. These view receptors form the visual receptors against which the proposals are assessed. The potential visibility of the proposed development and any seasonal changes to that visibility are also described next to each photograph and this informs the emerging development proposals. Viewpoints with no existing or potential view of the site are not considered further.

Figure 20 - Zone of theoretical visibility based on LIDAR data (ZTV 2)



KEY	
	Site Boundary
	1km Radius
	2km Radius
	3km Radius
	ZTV - LIDAR
	Development unlikely to be visible
	Development potentially visible

IMPORTANT

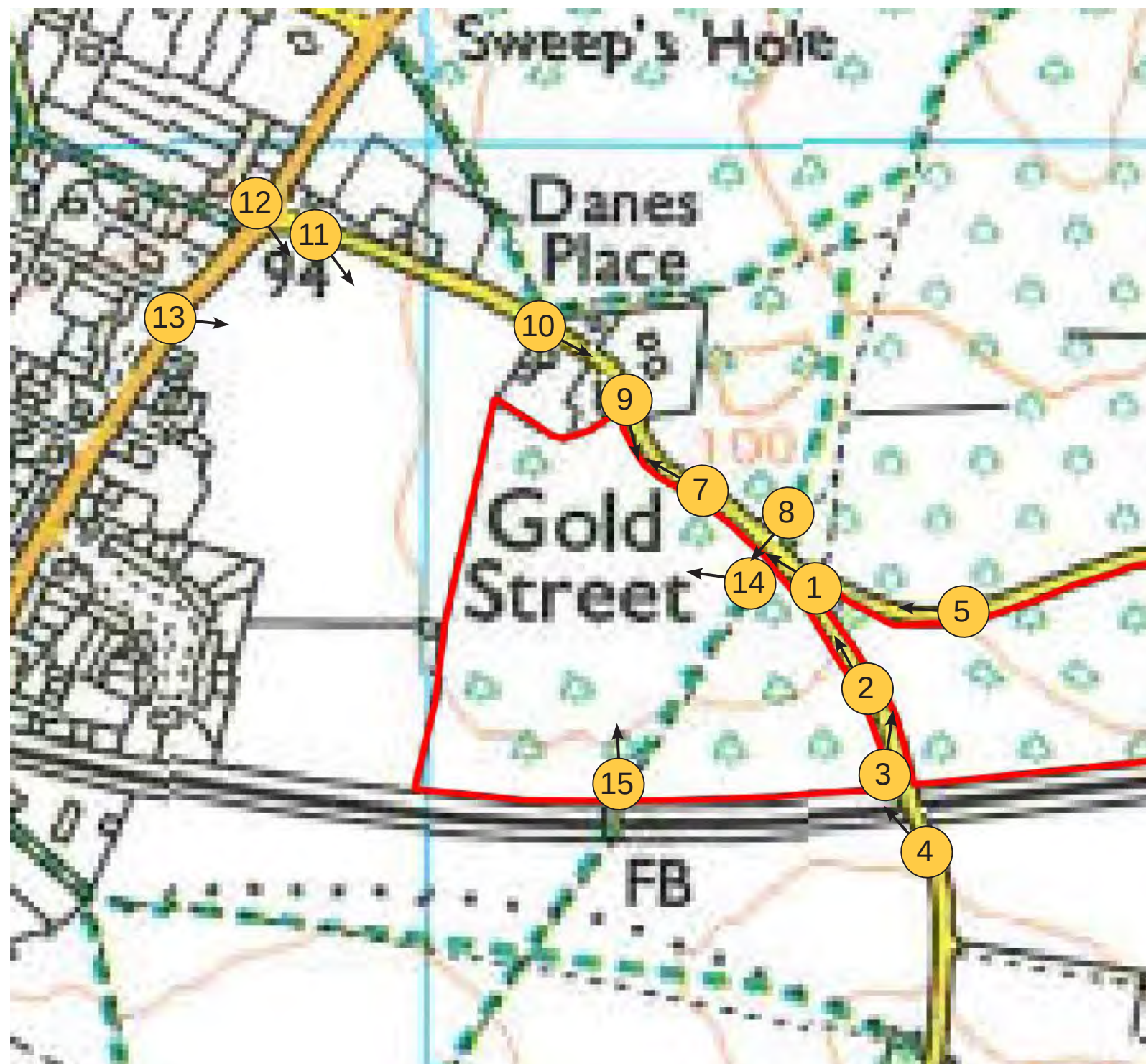
This computer generated model is based on a LIDAR DSM information, **which takes into account the buildings and vegetation in the area**. The ZTV diagram is theoretical, for use only as a starting point to inform potential areas to be tested in the field. As such, the ZTV is potentially misleading and actual visibility may be proven to be considerably less through fieldwork. This diagram was created with a building ridge height of 9.3m, and a viewer height of 1.65m.

Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

4.2. Methodology for ZTV based on LIDAR data

4.2.1. This second diagram showing the zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) Figure 20, is based on LIDAR data which is a 3D representation of land that includes trees, woodland cover and built form. The visual study zone has been limited to 3km, beyond which views are unlikely to be affected.

Figure 21 - Viewpoint location diagram - Close



Key

-  Site boundary
-  Representative viewpoint with potential view of site or proposed development

4.3. General description of visibility

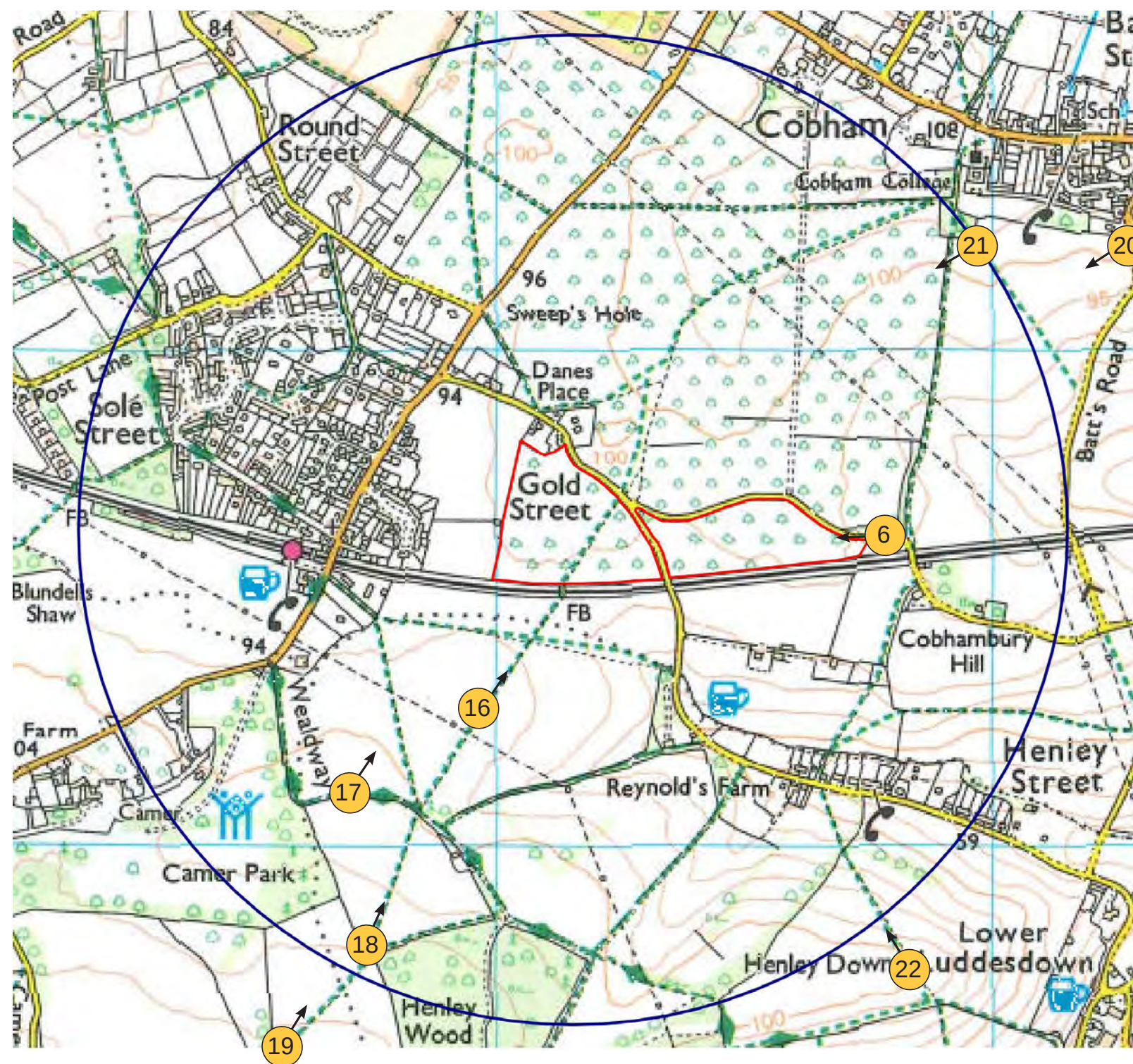
4.3.1. The visibility of the site is determined by the surrounding vegetation and topography of the landscape as well as built form on Gold Street and within the village of Sole Street. Close views to the western part of the site are generally confined to public footpath number NS109 as it crosses the site. Mature vegetation to the south and west of Gold Street, adjoining orchards, the woodland copse at the junction of Gold Street and Batt's Road, and mature trees surrounding residential properties to the northwest of the site largely restrict views from surrounding lanes and public rights of way. Public views from Sole Street are limited to a short stretch of Sole Street and the western end of Gold Street. More distant views are possible from public rights of way crossing undulating farmland to the south of the railway, along with vantagepoints to the northeast on the southern edge of Cobham. Private views may be possible from a number of surrounding residential properties, including those on Gold Street adjoining the northwestern corner of the site, and selected properties on the eastern edge of Sole Street, including those on Greenlands.

4.4. Specific viewpoints

4.4.1. Viewpoints represent as wide a range of situations as possible within the area of possible visibility as defined by the ZTV and field-verified, and include identified important views, sequential views along key routes, and views representative of a range of contexts and view receptors, at a range of distances and including key viewpoints. Figures 21 and 22 indicate the location of photographic viewpoints. Figures 23 - 45 set out photographs annotated to describe the distance of the viewpoint from the centre of the site unless otherwise noted, the direction of the view, the nature of the viewpoint, type and relative numbers of visual receptors and the visibility of the existing site. This forms the visual baseline. The potential visibility of the proposed development and any seasonal changes to that visibility are also described next to each photograph and this informs the emerging development proposals. Generally, photographs and descriptions of viewpoints with no view of the site or the proposed development are not included unless for a particular reason.

4.4.2. Generally the visual study zone for lower level development is limited to 3 km as views beyond this are unlikely to be affected.

Figure 22 - Viewpoint location diagram - Distant



Key

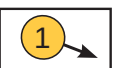
-  Site boundary
-  Representative viewpoint with potential view of site or proposed development

Figure 23 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 1



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

Viewpoint Data:

- Viewpoint elevation: 96m AOD
- Distance from proposed building: 190m

Description

Looking west/ northwest across vineyards within the site from the access at the junction of Gold Street and Batt's Road. Roadside trees and hedgerows to the south / west of Gold Street filter / restrict views across the northwestern part of the site, in the location of the proposed building. Gold Street is a narrow lane, largely lined by vegetation / agricultural fields, creating a rural approach to Sole Street.

Detractors

None noted.

Receptors

The view would be visible to users of Gold Street and Batt's Road, drivers, cyclists, walkers and horse riders.

Seasonal visibility

Increased visibility in the winter months when roadside vegetation is without leaf.

Value

This viewpoint is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Green Belt, and has a national value.

Susceptibility

Viewers using Gold Street and Batt's Road are considered to have a medium to high susceptibility to change. Although drivers may be more focused on the road, and less on their surroundings, these lanes are considered to be a scenic route, where awareness of views may be heightened.

View Sensitivity

A combination of the national value, and medium to high susceptibility gives a medium to high sensitivity of the viewer from this viewpoint.

4.5. View from site access on Gold Street (viewpoints 1 and 1a)

- 4.5.1. These views represent those available from Gold Street, at the site access and junction with Batt's Road. Views to the northwest corner of the site, and location of the proposed building, from the road carriageway at the junction are restricted by mature trees and hedgerows to the west of Gold Street. Views along the northern site boundary within the site are possible from the field gate entrance at viewpoint 1a. From this location there are views to the northwest corner of the site, partially restricted by intervening topography and vines.
- 4.5.2. View receptors would be drivers on the lanes who would be travelling more slowly than on the main road and generally with their attention on the road ahead, but also cyclists, horse riders and walkers who would be more focussed on their surroundings. All would have an expectation of scenic beauty within the Kent Downs National Landscape, with a national value, and a medium to high susceptibility on these lanes. The views have an overall medium to high sensitivity.
- 4.5.3. There would be views to the proposed building through the field access gate at viewpoint 1a, with possible glimpses from Gold Street at viewpoint 1.

Figure 24 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 1a



Description

Looking west / northwest across vineyards within the site over the field gate / access at the junction of Gold Street and Batt Road. Roadside trees and hedgerows to the south / west of Gold Street, along with vines and supports partially filter views across the northwestern part of the site, towards the location of the proposed building.

Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

Figure 25 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 2



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

Viewpoint Data:

- Viewpoint elevation: 93m AOD
- Distance from proposed building: 275m

Description

Looking northwest from Gold Street, south of the site access and junction of Gold Street and Batt's Road. Roadside trees and hedgerows to the west of Gold Street filter / restrict views across the western part of the site and location of the proposed building. Buildings within the grounds of Danes Place can be seen along the lane, to the north of the site. Gold Street is a narrow lane, largely lined by vegetation / agricultural fields, creating a rural approach to Sole Street.

Detractors

None noted

Receptors

The view would be visible to users of Gold Street, drivers, cyclists, walkers and horse riders.

Seasonal visibility

Increased visibility in the winter months when roadside vegetation is without leaf.

Value

This viewpoint is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Green Belt, and has a national value.

Susceptibility

Viewers using Gold Street are considered to have a medium to high susceptibility to change. Although drivers may be more focused on the road, and less on their surroundings, these lanes are considered to be a scenic route, where awareness of views may be heightened.

View Sensitivity

A combination of the national value, and medium to high susceptibility gives a medium to high sensitivity of the viewer from this viewpoint.

4.6. View from Gold Street (south) (viewpoints 2, 3 and 4)

- 4.6.1. These views represent a progression along Gold Street as it runs adjacent to the site, south of the junction with Batt's Road. Along this stretch, Gold Street is generally lined by dense vegetation to the west of the lane, including trees and hedgerows. Largely restricted by vegetation, there are limited opportunities for views into the western part of the site. Open views into the vineyards in the eastern part of the site can be seen in viewpoint 3. Views towards the western part of the site from locations south of the railway line are restricted by vegetation lining the railway cutting (viewpoint 4).
- 4.6.2. View receptors would be drivers on the lane who would be travelling more slowly than on the main road and generally with their attention on the road ahead, but also cyclists, horse riders and walkers who would be more focussed on their surroundings. All would have an expectation of scenic beauty within the Kent Downs National Landscape, with a national value, and a medium to high susceptibility on these lanes. The views have an overall medium to high sensitivity.
- 4.6.3. There would be no summer views to the proposed building from these viewpoints, with winter views unlikely. As such, these viewpoints will not be taken forward to be assessed in Volume 2.

Figure 26 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 3



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

Viewpoint Data:

- Viewpoint elevation: 92m AOD
- Distance from proposed building: 325m

Description

Looking north along Gold Street, immediately to the north of the railway line. Views across vineyards in the eastern part of the site, along with a temporary storage building. Roadside trees and hedgerows to the west of Gold Street restrict views across the western part of the site and location of the proposed building. Gold Street is a narrow lane, largely lined by vegetation / agricultural fields, creating a rural approach to Sole Street.

Detractors

None noted

Receptors

The view would be visible to users of Gold Street, drivers, cyclists, walkers and horse riders.

Seasonal visibility

Increased visibility in the winter months when roadside vegetation is without leaf.

Value

This viewpoint is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Green Belt, and has a national value.

Susceptibility

Viewers using Gold Street are considered to have a medium to high susceptibility to change. Although drivers may be more focused on the road, and less on their surroundings, these lanes are considered to be a scenic route, where awareness of views may be heightened.

View Sensitivity

A combination of the national value, and medium to high susceptibility gives a medium to high sensitivity of the viewer from this viewpoint.

Figure 27 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 4



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

Viewpoint Data:

- Viewpoint elevation: 91m AOD
- Distance from the proposed building: 360m

Description

Looking northwest along Gold Street, immediately to the south of the railway line. Views across the railway line (which is in cutting) are restricted by dense vegetation lining the route. Roadside trees and hedgerows to the west of Gold Street and lining the railway restrict views across the western part of the site and location of the proposed building. Gold Street is a narrow lane, largely lined by vegetation / agricultural fields, creating a rural approach to Sole Street.

Detractors

Fencing associated with the railway crossing.

Receptors

The view would be visible to users of Gold Street, drivers, cyclists, walkers and horse riders.

Seasonal visibility

Increased visibility in the winter months when roadside / railway vegetation is without leaf.

Value

This viewpoint is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Green Belt, and has a national value.

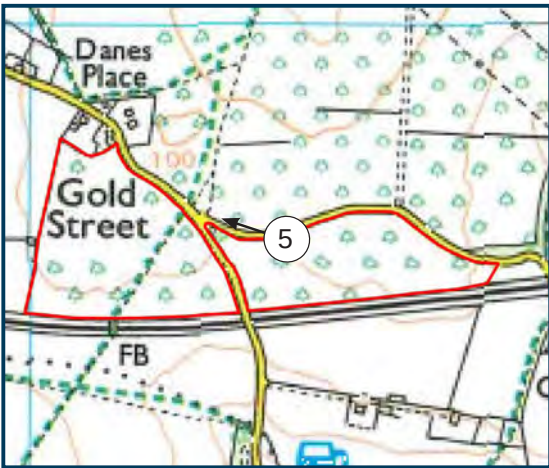
Susceptibility

Viewers using Gold Street are considered to have a medium to high susceptibility to change. Although drivers may be more focused on the road, and less on their surroundings, these lanes are considered to be a scenic route, where awareness of views may be heightened.

View Sensitivity

A combination of the national value, and medium to high susceptibility gives a medium to high sensitivity of the viewer from this viewpoint.

Figure 28 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 5



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

Viewpoint Data:

- Viewpoint elevation: 95m AOD
- Distance from proposed building: 275m

Description

Looking northwest along Batt's Road, to the east of the site access and junction with Gold Street. Open views across vineyards within the eastern part of the site and glimpsed views to vines within the western part of the site. Roadside trees and hedgerows lining Gold Street and the small woodland copse to the east of the junction of Gold Street and Batt's Road restrict views across the western part of the site and location of the proposed building. Batt's Road is a narrow lane, largely lined by vegetation / agricultural fields, creating a rural approach to Sole Street.

Detractors

None noted.

Receptors

The view would be visible to users of Batt's Road, drivers, cyclists, walkers and horse riders.

Seasonal visibility

Increased visibility in the winter months when roadside vegetation and small copse is without leaf.

Value

This viewpoint is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Green Belt, and has a national value.

Susceptibility

Viewers using Batt's Road are considered to have a medium to high susceptibility to change. Although drivers may be more focused on the road, and less on their surroundings, these lanes are considered to be a scenic route, where awareness of views may be heightened.

View Sensitivity

A combination of the national value, and medium to high susceptibility gives a medium to high sensitivity of the viewer from this viewpoint.

4.7. View from Batt's Road (viewpoints 5 and 6)

- 4.7.1. These views represent a progression along Batt's Road eastwards from Gold Street at the site access, where it forms the northern site boundary. There are open views southward from this stretch of Batt's Lane across the vines in the eastern part of the site. To the north there are often open views across pasture, with areas of orchard to the west and vineyards to the east. Views towards the western part of the site from viewpoint 5 are largely restricted by intervening vegetation, both foreground orchards and the small woodland copse, as well as trees / hedgerows lining Gold Street. The small copse at the junction of Batt's Road and Gold Street along with mature trees surrounding properties on Gold Street at the northwestern corner of the site are prominent on the horizon in views from Batt's Lane moving east, illustrated in viewpoint 6. Intervening vegetation including orchards and vegetation on Gold Street restrict summer views to the northwestern part of the site / location of the proposed building. All views will be more open during winter months.
- 4.7.2. View receptors would be drivers on the lane who would be travelling more slowly than on the main road and generally with their attention on the road ahead, but also cyclists, horse riders and walkers who would be more focussed on their surroundings. All would have an expectation of scenic beauty within the Kent Downs National Landscape, with a national value, and a medium to high susceptibility on this lane. The views have an overall medium to high sensitivity.
- 4.7.3. There may be glimpsed views to the proposed building from these viewpoints.

Figure 29 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 6



Approximate location of
proposed building (beyond
intervening vegetation)



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database
right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence
Number 10001 6657

Viewpoint Data:

- Viewpoint elevation: 93m AOD
- Distance from proposed building: 640m

Description

Looking northwest along Batt's Road, at the eastern extent of the site. Open views across vineyards within the eastern part of the site, with woodland copses visible at the junction with Gold Street and the northwestern corner of the site. Glimpsed views along Batt's Lane to buildings within the grounds of Danes Place. Intervening topography and vegetation, including vines and roadside vegetation on Gold Street, partially restricts views to the western part of the site and location of the proposed building. Batt's Road is a narrow lane, lined by vegetation / agricultural fields, creating a rural approach to Sole Street.

Detractors

None noted.

Receptors

The view would be visible to users of Batt's Road, drivers, cyclists, walkers and horse riders.

Seasonal visibility

Increased visibility in winter months when roadside vegetation and small copse are without leaf.

Value

This viewpoint is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Green Belt, and has a national value.

Susceptibility

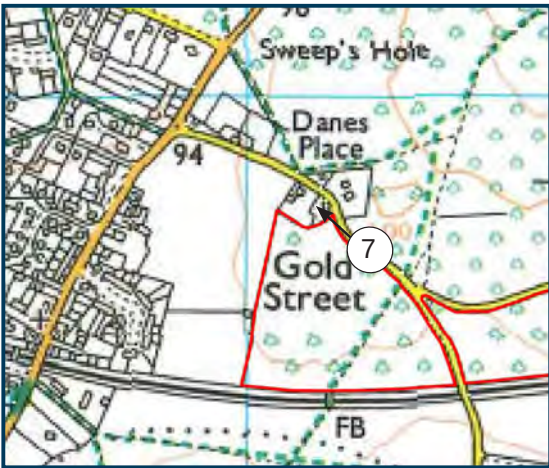
Viewers using Batt's Road are considered to have a medium to high susceptibility to change. Although drivers may be more focused on the road, and less on their surroundings, these lanes are considered to be a scenic route, where awareness of views may be

heightened.

View Sensitivity

A combination of the national value, and medium to high susceptibility gives a medium

Figure 30 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 7



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

Viewpoint Data:

- Viewpoint elevation: 98m AOD
- Distance from proposed building: 100m

Description

Looking northwest along Gold Street, north of the site access and junction with Batt's Road. Filtered views across orchards to the north. Roadside vegetation to the south of Gold Street restricts summer views across the western part of the site. Gold Street is a narrow lane, largely lined by vegetation / agricultural fields, creating a rural approach to Sole Street.

Detractors

None noted.

Receptors

The view would be visible to users of Gold Street, drivers, cyclists, walkers and horse riders.

Seasonal visibility

Increased visibility in the winter months when roadside vegetation is without leaf.

Value

This viewpoint is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Green Belt, and has a national value.

Susceptibility

Viewers using Gold Street are considered to have a medium to high susceptibility to change. Although drivers may be more focused on the road, and less on their surroundings, these lanes are considered to be a scenic route, where awareness of views may be heightened.

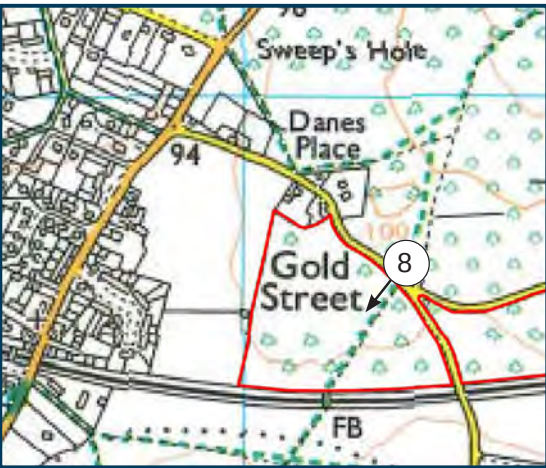
View Sensitivity

A combination of the national value, and medium to high susceptibility gives a medium to high sensitivity of the viewer from this viewpoint.

4.8. View from Gold Street adjacent to the site (viewpoints 7, 9 and 10)

- 4.8.1. These views represent a progression along Gold Street where it runs adjacent to the site, north of Batt's Road. This stretch of Gold Street is lined by vegetation, including occasional mature trees and hedgerows which are gappy in places. Two properties, Hevers Cottage and Mulberry House are located between Gold Street and the northern site boundary, illustrated in viewpoints 9 and 10. Summer views into the western part of the site from this stretch of Gold Street are largely restricted by vegetation lining the lane, as well as Hevers Cottage and Mulberry House and outbuildings and associated garden vegetation. These views would be more open during winter months, in particular where hedgerows are gappy, as illustrated in viewpoint 7.
- 4.8.2. View receptors would be drivers on the lane who would be travelling more slowly than on the main road and generally with their attention on the road ahead, but also cyclists, horse riders and walkers who would be more focussed on their surroundings. All would have an expectation of scenic beauty within the Kent Downs National Landscape, with a national value, and a medium to high susceptibility on this lane. The views have an overall medium to high sensitivity.
- 4.8.3. There may be glimpsed views to the proposed building from these viewpoints.

Figure 31 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 8



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

Viewpoint Data:

- Viewpoint elevation: 97m AOD
- Distance from proposed building: 160m

Description

Looking west from public footpath NS190, within the site and to the south of Gold Street. Views across vines within the site towards the location of the proposed building. Views to the west across the site and beyond towards Sole Street are partially restricted by rising ground. Middle distance views to farmland and woodland on the horizon to the southwest.

Detractors

Pylons visible crossing farmland to the southwest of the site and the railway.

Receptors

The view would be visible to users of public footpath number NS190 as it crosses the site.

Seasonal visibility

Increased visibility in the winter months when vines and roadside vegetation are without leaf.

Value

This viewpoint is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Green Belt, and has a national value.

Susceptibility

Viewers using public footpath number NS190 are considered to have a high susceptibility to change.

View Sensitivity

A combination of the national value, and high susceptibility gives a high sensitivity of the

4.9. View from public footpath number NS190, north of Gold Street (viewpoint 8)

- 4.9.1. These views represent those gained from public footpath number NS190 to the north of Gold Street. Intervening rows of orchard trees, along with vegetation lining Gold Street restrict summer views to the northwestern part of the site from viewpoint 8 and the stretch of public footpath to the north of this. Distant views southwards across the site are possible over a trimmed hedgerow to the east of the footpath crossing, at the junction with Batt's Road. Although unlikely, there may be glimpses to the northwestern part of the site, and the location of the proposed building during winter months.
- 4.9.2. View receptors would be users of public footpath number NS190, to the north of Gold Street, who would be focussed on their surroundings, and would have an expectation of scenic beauty within the Kent Downs National Landscape, with a national value, and a high susceptibility. The views have an overall high sensitivity.
- 4.9.3. There would be no summer views to the proposed building from this viewpoint, however glimpsed views during winter months may be possible.

Figure 32 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 9



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

Viewpoint Data:

- Viewpoint elevation: 98m AOD
- Distance from proposed building: 75m

Description

Looking south from Gold Street, adjacent to Hevers Cottage. Filtered views into the northwestern part of the site and location of the proposed building are partially restricted by roadside trees and hedgerow to the south of Gold Street, as well as Hevers Cottage and associated outbuildings and garden vegetation.

Detractors

None noted.

Receptors

The view would be visible to users of Gold Street, drivers, cyclists, walkers and horse riders.

Seasonal visibility

Increased visibility in the winter months when roadside and garden vegetation is without leaf.

Value

This viewpoint is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Green Belt, and has a national value.

Susceptibility

Viewers using Gold Street are considered to have a medium to high susceptibility to change. Although drivers may be more focused on the road, and less on their surroundings, these lanes are considered to be a scenic route, where awareness of views may be heightened.

View Sensitivity

A combination of the national value, and medium to high susceptibility gives a medium to high sensitivity of the viewer from this viewpoint.

Figure 33 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 10



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

Viewpoint Data:

- Viewpoint elevation: 97m AOD
- Distance from proposed building 115m

Description

Looking south from Gold Street, adjacent to Mulberry House. Views into the northwestern part of the site and location of the proposed building are restricted by roadside trees and hedgerow to the south of Gold Street, as well as Mulberry House and garden vegetation.

Detractors

None noted.

Receptors

The view would be visible to users of Gold Street, drivers, cyclists, walkers and horse riders.

Seasonal visibility

Increased visibility in the winter months when roadside and garden vegetation is without leaf.

Value

This viewpoint is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Green Belt, and has a national value.

Susceptibility

Viewers using Gold Street are considered to have a medium to high susceptibility to change. Although drivers may be more focused on the road, and less on their surroundings, these lanes are considered to be a scenic route, where awareness of views may be heightened.

View Sensitivity

A combination of the national value, and medium to high susceptibility gives a medium to high sensitivity of the viewer from this viewpoint.

Figure 34 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 11



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

Viewpoint Data:

- Viewpoint elevation: 94m AOD
- Distance from proposed building: 215m

Description

Looking south from Gold Street, adjacent to Bramble Cottage. Views across pasture towards the northwestern site boundary, are filtered by occasional / gappy vegetation lining the western end of Gold Street. Views to buildings and vegetation within the grounds of Mulberry House and glimpsed views over the northwestern site boundary and across the site.

Detractors

None noted.

Receptors

The view would be visible to users of Gold Street, drivers, cyclists, walkers and horse riders.

Seasonal visibility

Increased visibility in the winter months when roadside and garden vegetation is without leaf.

Value

This viewpoint is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Green Belt, and has a national value.

Susceptibility

Viewers using Gold Street are considered to have a medium to high susceptibility to change. Although drivers may be more focused on the road, and less on their surroundings, these lanes are considered to be a scenic route, where awareness of views may be heightened.

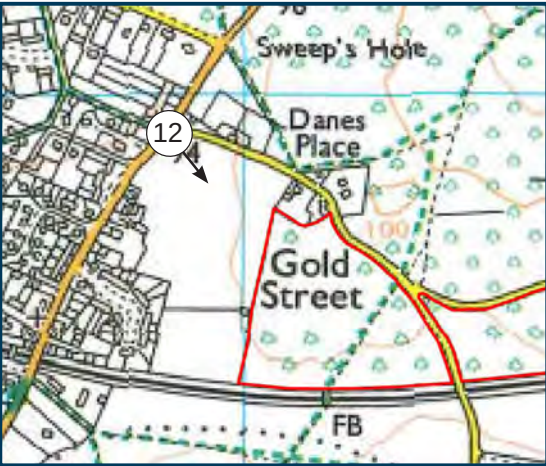
View Sensitivity

A combination of the national value, and medium to high susceptibility gives a medium to high sensitivity of the viewer from this viewpoint.

4.10. View from Sole Street / west end of Gold Street (viewpoints 11, 12 and 13)

- 4.10.1. These views represent those gained from the western end of Gold Street and the stretch of Sole Street immediately to the south of the junction with Gold Street. There are largely open views across pasture to the western site boundary from the western end of Gold Street, and a short stretch of Sole Street to the south, restricted in places by a group of mature trees at the road junction. The northwestern corner of the site and location of the proposed building are partially restricted by mature vegetation surrounding Mulberry House and Hevers Cottage from viewpoints 11 and 12. Viewpoint 13 has more direct views to the northwestern corner of the site. Housing to the east of Sole Street restricts views on travelling south of viewpoint 13. These views would be more open during winter months.
- 4.10.2. View receptors would be drivers on Gold Street and Sole Street who would be travelling more slowly than on the main road and generally with their attention on the road ahead, but also cyclists, horse riders and walkers who would be more focussed on their surroundings. All would have an expectation of scenic beauty on the edge of the Kent Downs National Landscape, with a national value, a medium to high susceptibility on Gold Street, and a medium susceptibility on the busier Sole Street. The views have an overall medium to high sensitivity.
- 4.10.3. There will be views to the proposed building from viewpoint 13, with possible glimpsed views from viewpoints 11 and 12.

Figure 35 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 12



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

Viewpoint Data:

- Viewpoint elevation: 94m AOD
- Distance from proposed building: 290m

Description

Looking southeast from the junction of Sole Street and Gold Street. Views across pasture towards the northwestern site boundary, are filtered by occasional / gappy vegetation lining Sole Street and the western end of Gold Street. Views to buildings and vegetation within the grounds of Mulberry House and glimpsed views over the northwestern site boundary and across the site.

Detractors

None noted.

Receptors

The view would be visible to users of Sole Street, drivers, cyclists, walkers and horse riders.

Seasonal visibility

Increased visibility in the winter months when roadside and garden vegetation is without leaf.

Value

This viewpoint is located on the boundary of the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Green Belt (the boundaries of which run along Sole Street), and has a national value.

Susceptibility

Viewers using Sole Street are considered to have a medium susceptibility to change.

View Sensitivity

A combination of the national value, and medium susceptibility gives a medium to high sensitivity of the viewer from this viewpoint.

Figure 36 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 13



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

Viewpoint Data:

- Viewpoint elevation: 94m AOD
- Distance from proposed building: 310m

Description

Looking southeast from Sole Street, to the south of the junction with Gold Street. Views across pasture towards the northwestern site boundary, are filtered by occasional / gappy vegetation lining Sole Street in this location. Views to buildings and vegetation within the grounds of Mulberry House and glimpsed views over the northwestern site boundary and across the site.

Detractors

None noted.

Receptors

The view would be visible to users of Sole Street, drivers, cyclists, walkers and horse riders.

Seasonal visibility

Increased visibility in the winter months when roadside and garden vegetation is without leaf.

Value

This viewpoint is located on the boundary of the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Green Belt (the boundaries of which run along Sole Street), and has a national value.

Susceptibility

Viewers using Sole Street are considered to have a medium susceptibility to change.

View Sensitivity

A combination of the national value, and medium susceptibility gives a medium to high sensitivity of the viewer from this viewpoint.

Figure 37 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 14



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

Viewpoint Data:

- Viewpoint elevation: 97m AOD
- Distance from proposed building: 160m

Description

Looking west from public footpath NS190, within the site and to the south of Gold Street. Views across vines within the site towards the location of the proposed building. Views to the west across the site and beyond towards Sole Street are partially restricted by rising ground. Middle distance views to farmland and woodland on the horizon to the southwest.

Detractors

Pylons visible crossing farmland to the southwest of the site and the railway.

Receptors

The view would be visible to users of public footpath number NS190 as it crosses the site.

Seasonal visibility

Increased visibility in the winter months when vines and roadside vegetation are without leaf.

Value

This viewpoint is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Green Belt, and has a national value.

Susceptibility

Viewers using public footpath number NS190 are considered to have a high susceptibility to change.

View Sensitivity

A combination of the national value, and high susceptibility gives a high sensitivity of the viewer from this viewpoint.

4.11. View from public footpath number NS190 crossing the site (viewpoints 14 and 15)

- 4.11.1. These views represent those gained from public footpath number NS190 as it crosses the western part of the site. There are views across vines towards the northwestern corner of the site / the location of the proposed building from the public footpath as it crosses the site. From viewpoint 14, views are contained by vegetation on Gold Street following the northern boundary. Similarly, rising ground prevents views to Sole Street beyond the site to the west. On travelling south on the footpath crossing the site, views are focused towards the wooded undulating horizon at Camer Park and beyond. Mature vegetation adjoining Gold Street, including the woodland copse at Batt's Road, are prominent on the horizon looking north from viewpoint 15, confining views to land within the site.
- 4.11.2. View receptors would be users of public footpath number NS190 as it crosses the site, who would be focussed on their surroundings, and would have an expectation of scenic beauty within the Kent Downs National Landscape, with a national value, and a high susceptibility. The views have an overall high sensitivity.
- 4.11.3. There would be views to the proposed building from these viewpoints.

Figure 38 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 15



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

Viewpoint Data:

- Viewpoint elevation: 93m AOD
- Distance from proposed building: 230m

Description

Looking north from public footpath NS190, within the site and immediately to the north of the railway. Views across vines within the site towards the location of the proposed building. Mature trees and vegetation lining Gold Street form the horizon.

Views to the west across the site and beyond towards Sole Street are partially restricted by rising ground. Middle distance views to farmland and woodland on the horizon to the southwest.

Detractors

Pylons visible crossing farmland to the north of Gold Street and Batts Road.

Receptors

The view would be visible to users of public footpath number NS190 as it crosses the site.

Seasonal visibility

Increased visibility in the winter months when vines are without leaf.

Value

This viewpoint is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Green Belt, and has a national value.

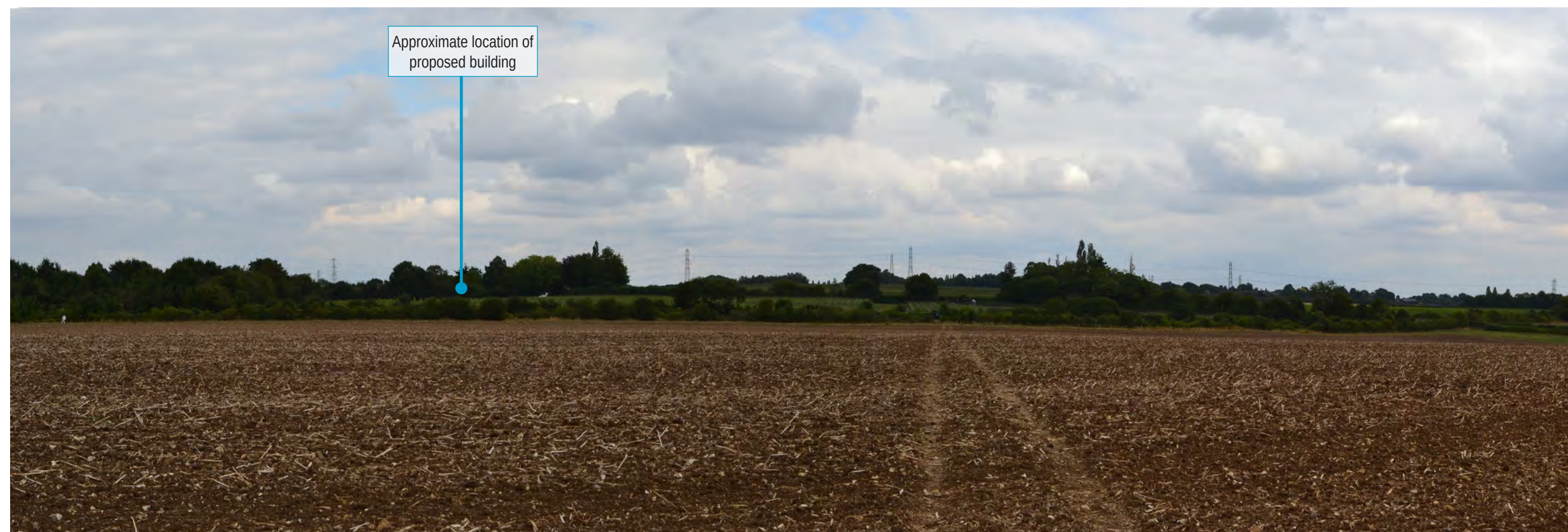
Susceptibility

Viewers using public footpath number NS190 are considered to have a high susceptibility to change.

View Sensitivity

A combination of the national value, and high susceptibility gives a high sensitivity of the viewer from this viewpoint.

Figure 39 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 16



Approximate location of
proposed building



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

Viewpoint Data:

- Viewpoint elevation: 97m AOD
- Distance from proposed building: 500m

Description

Looking north from public footpath NS190 to the south of the railway. Views across farmland and the railway in cutting towards the location of the proposed building. Mature trees and vegetation lining Gold Street (and on the edge of Cobham to the north) form the horizon. Vegetation lining the railway provides partial screening of the site.

Detractors

Pylons visible on the horizon crossing farmland to the north of Gold Street and Batts Road. Viewpoint located under a line of pylons.

Receptors

The view would be visible to users of public footpath number NS190 as it crosses farmland to the south of the site and the railway.

Seasonal visibility

Increased visibility in the winter months when intervening vegetation is without leaf.

Value

This viewpoint is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Green Belt, and has a national value.

Susceptibility

Viewers using public footpath number NS190 are considered to have a high susceptibility to change.

View Sensitivity

A combination of the national value, and high susceptibility gives a high sensitivity of the viewer from this viewpoint.

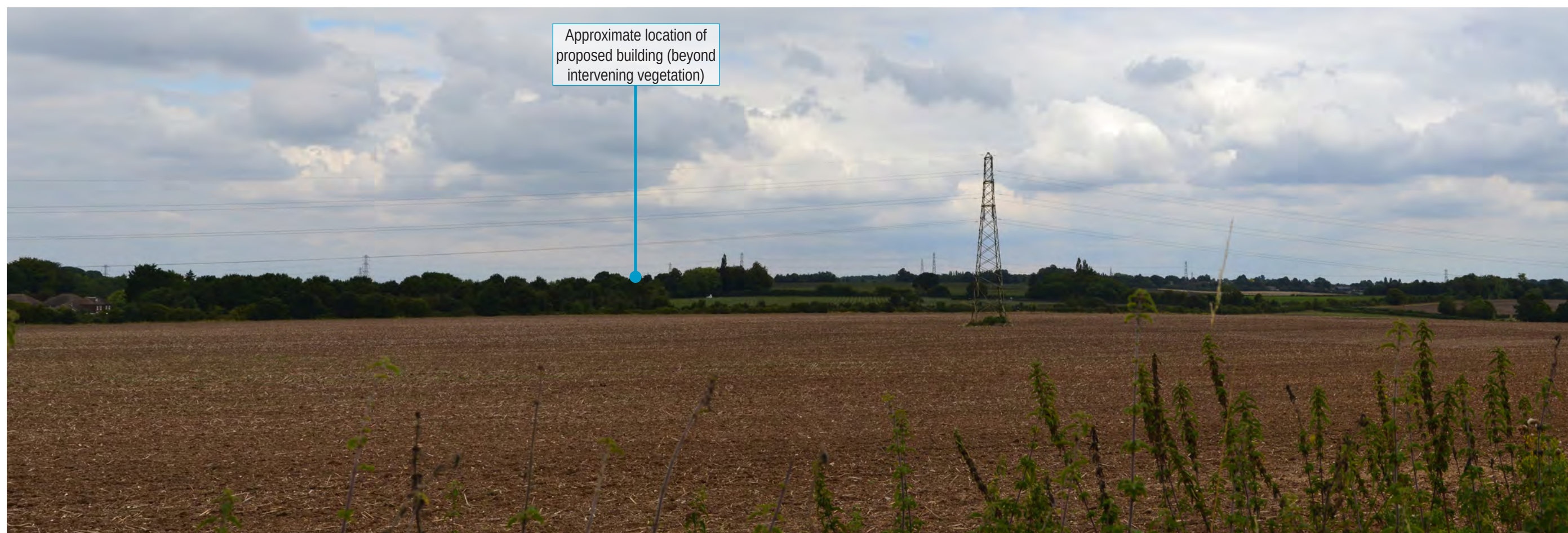
4.12. View from public footpath number NS190 to the south of the site and the railway (viewpoints 16, 17, 18 and 19)

4.12.1. These views represent those gained from public rights of way crossing farmland to the south of the site. Views to the site are possible from an area of rising ground immediately to the south of the railway line. Contained by woodland at Camer Park and Henley Wood, this area is crossed by a number of public rights of way, including the Wealdway long distance route. Viewpoints 16 to 19 offer similar views to the site, from varying distances. Views to the northwestern part of the site / location of the proposed building are available from much of public footpaths NS109 and NS173 in this area, as well as a short stretch of the Wealdway / public bridleway NS242/2, immediately to the west of footpath NS190. Land falls to the east prohibiting views to the site from Henley Street and Gold Street, south of the railway. Woodland within Camer Park restricts views from the Country Park, with the oblique angle restricting views from the southern edge of Sole Street, south of the railway. Vegetation associated with Gold Street, including the woodland copse at Batt's Road and mature trees surrounding the properties Hevers Cottage and Mulberry House provides a strong backdrop to the site from these locations. Pylons are prominent in the foreground as well as on the horizon from a number of these viewpoints.

4.12.2. View receptors would be users of public rights of way, including public footpaths number NS190 and NS173, public bridleway number NS242/2, the Wealdway long distance route, as well as a route promoted by Camer Park Country Park, who would be focussed on their surroundings, and would have an expectation of scenic beauty within the Kent Downs National Landscape, with a national value, and a high susceptibility. The views have an overall high sensitivity.

4.12.3. There would be views to the proposed building from these viewpoints.

Figure 40 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 17



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

Viewpoint Data:

- Viewpoint elevation: 102m AOD
- Distance from proposed building: 750m

Description

Looking north from public bridleway NS242/2, Wealdway long distance route and a promoted walking route associated with Camer Park Country Park. Views across farmland and the railway in cutting towards the location of the proposed building. Undulating farmland and blocks of woodland form the horizon to the north, with occasional glimpses of buildings within Sole Street and Cobham.

Detractors

Pylons visible crossing farmland in the foreground, and on the horizon crossing farmland to the north of Gold Street and Batts Road.

Receptors

The view would be visible to users of public bridleway NS242/2, the Wealdway long distance route and a promoted walking route associated with Camer Park Country Park.

Seasonal visibility

Some increased visibility in the winter months when vegetation is without leaf.

Value

This viewpoint is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Green Belt, and has a national value.

Susceptibility

Viewers using public bridleway NS242/2, the Wealdway long distance route and a promoted walking route associated with Camer Park Country Park have a high susceptibility to change.

View Sensitivity

A combination of the national value, and high susceptibility gives a high sensitivity of the viewer from this viewpoint.

Figure 41 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 18



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

Viewpoint Data:

- Viewpoint elevation: 110m AOD
- Distance from proposed building: 1.0km

Description

Looking north from public footpath NS190. Views across farmland and the railway in cutting towards the location of the proposed building. Undulating farmland and blocks of woodland form the horizon to the north, with occasional glimpses of isolated dwellings within farmland and buildings within Sole Street and Cobham.

Detractors

Pylons visible crossing farmland in the middle and far distance.

Receptors

The view would be visible to users of public footpath NS190.

Seasonal visibility

Some increased visibility in the winter months when vegetation is without leaf.

Value

This viewpoint is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Green Belt, and has a national value.

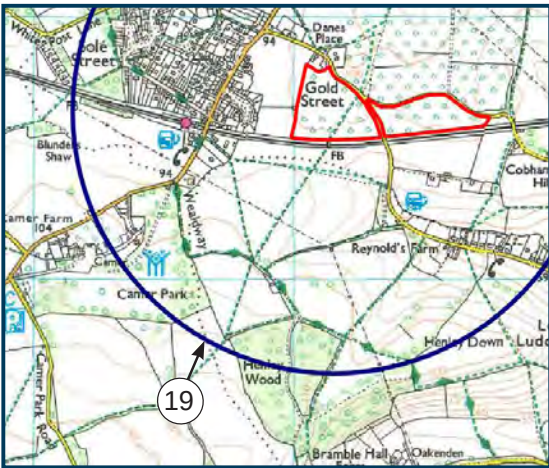
Susceptibility

Viewers using public footpath NS190 have a high susceptibility to change.

View Sensitivity

A combination of the national value, and high susceptibility gives a high sensitivity of the viewer from this viewpoint.

Figure 42 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 19



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

Viewpoint Data:

- Viewpoint elevation: 117m AOD
- Distance from proposed building: 1.3km

Description

Looking north from public footpath NS173. Views across farmland and the railway in cutting towards the location of the proposed building. Views to the northwestern corner of the site restricted by intervening vegetation. Foreground woodland frames view to undulating farmland and blocks of woodland form the horizon to the north.

Detractors

Pylons visible crossing farmland in the middle and far distance.

Receptors

The view would be visible to users of public footpath NS173.

Seasonal visibility

Some increased visibility in the winter months when vegetation is without leaf.

Value

This viewpoint is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Green Belt, and has a national value.

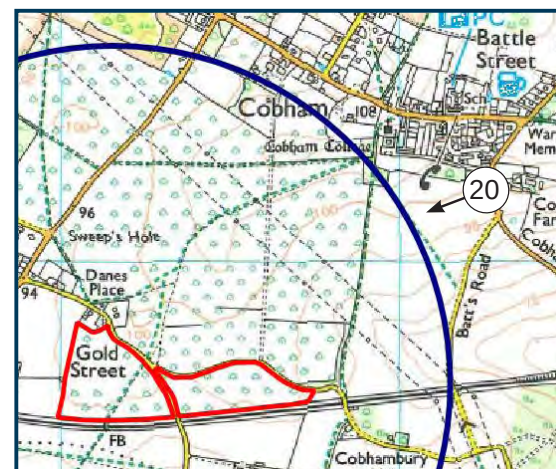
Susceptibility

Viewers using public footpath NS173 have a high susceptibility to change.

View Sensitivity

A combination of the national value, and high susceptibility gives a high sensitivity of the viewer from this viewpoint.

Figure 43 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 20



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

Viewpoint Data:

- Viewpoint elevation: 100m AOD
- Distance from proposed building: 1.25km

Description

Looking southwest from a field gate on Cobhambury Road, north of the junction with Batts Road, and on the southern edge of Cobham. Views across farmland towards the site and location of the proposed building, are partially restricted by topography and mature vegetation associated with Gold Street. Glimpsed views to the roofs of buildings at Danes Place, amongst surrounding mature trees. A wooded horizon is formed by undulating farmland to the south.

Detractors

Pylons crossing farmland in the foreground and middle distance.

Receptors

The view would be visible to users of Cobhambury Road, drivers, cyclists, walkers and horse riders.

Seasonal visibility

Increased visibility in the winter months when intervening vegetation is without leaf.

Value

This viewpoint is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Green Belt, and has a national value. It is located on the edge of the Cobham Conservation Area.

Susceptibility

Viewers using Cobhambury Road are considered to have a medium to high susceptibility to change. Although drivers may be more focused on the road, and less on their surroundings, this lane is considered to be a scenic route, where awareness of views may be heightened.

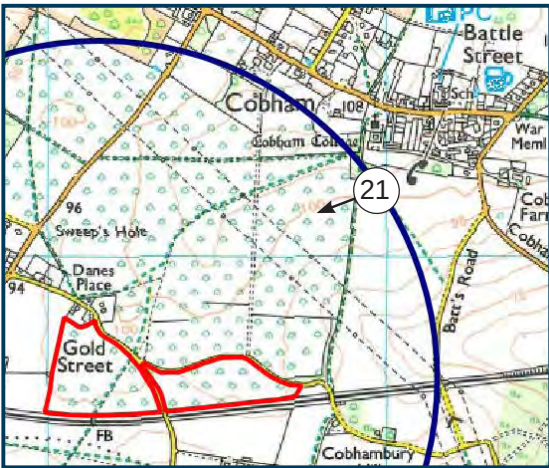
View Sensitivity

A combination of the national value, and medium to high susceptibility gives a medium to high sensitivity of the viewer from this viewpoint.

4.13. View from the southern edge of Cobham (viewpoints 20 and 21)

- 4.13.1. These views represent those gained from the southern edge of Cobham, on Cobhambury Road, and public footpath number NS185. From these elevated locations views are focused towards the undulating wooded ridges on the horizon to the south. Vegetation associated with Gold Street, including the woodland copse at Batt's Road and mature trees surrounding properties Hevers Cottage and Danes Place are visible on the horizon to the west. Land within the western part of the site is not visible from these locations, screened by intervening topography and vegetation. Views would be more open during winter months. Pylons are prominent in these views.
- 4.13.2. View receptors would be drivers on Cobhambury Road who would be travelling more slowly than on the main road and generally with their attention on the road ahead, but also cyclists, horse riders and walkers who would be more focussed on their surroundings, as well as users of public footpath number NS185. All would have an expectation of scenic beauty within the Kent Downs National Landscape, with a national value, a medium to high susceptibility on the road and a high susceptibility on the footpath. Viewpoint 20 has a medium to high sensitivity, and viewpoint 21 a high sensitivity.
- 4.13.3. There may be glimpses to the proposed building from these viewpoints.

Figure 44 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 21



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

Viewpoint Data:

- Viewpoint elevation: 105m AOD
- Distance from proposed building: 985m

Description

Looking southwest from public footpath number NS185, on the southern edge of Cobham. Views across farmland towards the site and location of the proposed building, are partially restricted by intervening topography, orchard trees and mature vegetation associated with Gold Street. Glimpsed views to the roofs of buildings at Danes Place, amongst surrounding mature trees. A wooded horizon is formed by undulating farmland to the south.

Detractors

Pylons crossing farmland in the foreground and middle distance.

Receptors

The view would be visible to users of public footpath number NS185.

Seasonal visibility

Increased visibility in the winter months when intervening vegetation is without leaf.

Value

This viewpoint is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Green Belt, and has a national value. It is located outside but adjacent to the southern edge of the Cobham Conservation Area.

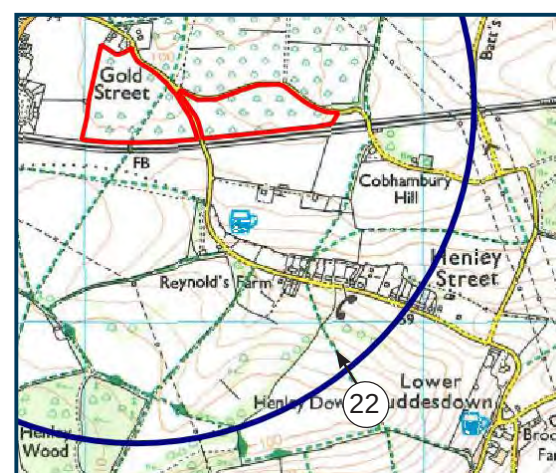
Susceptibility

Viewers using public footpath number NS185 have a high susceptibility to change.

View Sensitivity

A combination of the national value, and high susceptibility gives a high sensitivity of the viewer from this viewpoint.

Figure 45 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Representative viewpoint 22



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024. All Ordnance Survey data used under Copyright Licence Number 10001 6657

Viewpoint Data:

- Viewpoint elevation: 101m AOD
- Distance from the location of the proposed building: 1.25km

Description

Looking northwest from public footpath number NS188 on Henley Down, north of Luddesdown. Views across foreground vineyard towards the site. Small woodland copse at the junction of Gold Street and Batts Road is visible on the horizon. Views to the western part of the site and location of the proposed building are restricted by intervening mature vegetation on the foreground. Views to dwellings and farm buildings at Henley Street.

Detractors

Pylons crossing farmland are visible on the horizon to the north.

Receptors

The view would be visible to users of public footpath number NS188.

Seasonal visibility

Increased visibility in the winter months when intervening vegetation is without leaf.

Value

This viewpoint is located within the Kent Downs National Landscape and the Green Belt, and has a national value.

Susceptibility

Viewers using public footpath number NS185 have a high susceptibility to change.

View Sensitivity

A combination of the national value, and high susceptibility gives a high sensitivity of the viewer from this viewpoint.

4.14. View from Henley Down, above Luddesdown (viewpoint 22)

- 4.14.1. These views represent those gained from the southern edge of Cobham, on Cobhambury Road, and public footpath number NS185. From these elevated locations views are focused towards the undulating wooded ridges on the horizon to the south. Vegetation associated with Gold Street, including the woodland copse at Batt's Road and mature trees surrounding properties Hevers Cottage and Danes Place are visible on the horizon to the west. Land within the western part of the site is not visible from these locations, screened by intervening topography and vegetation. Views would be more open during winter months. Pylons are prominent in these views.
- 4.14.2. View receptors would be users of public footpath number NS188, who would have an expectation of scenic beauty within the Kent Downs National Landscape. There would be a national value, a high susceptibility on the footpath, and an overall high sensitivity.
- 4.14.3. The proposed building would not be visible during the summer from this viewpoint, and although more open, it is unlikely the building would be visible during winter months.

Figure 46 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Private views



View through the northern boundary to Hevers Cottage from within the northwestern corner of the site



View through the northern boundary to the grounds of Hevers Cottage from within the site



Glimpsed views to Danes Place through the northern boundary from the northwestern corner of the site

Private views to the site include:

- Adjoining properties to the south of Gold Street: Hevers Cottage and Mulberry House;
- Properties to the north of Gold Street: Danes Place and The Briars;
- Properties at the western end of Gold Street;
- Properties on Sole Street: properties to the west of Sole Street, including Westbank and Jy Suis Jy Reste; properties to the east of Sole Street, including those on Greenlands;
- Cobhambury Farm, on Cobhambury Road, Cobham (including listed Cobhambury House);
- Unamed dwelling on Cobhambury Road (opposite Cobhambury Farm), Cobham.

Receptors

Private residents;

Seasonal visibility

Many of these views are restricted / filtered by intervening vegetation on site and field boundaries, within the grounds of private properties and lining roads; and screening would decrease during winter months;

Value

Many of these views are within the Kent Downs National Park and the Green Belt; with some from listed properties and / or within conservation areas. Value will vary, but is likely to be medium to high or high;

Susceptibility

Susceptibility to change will be high where visual receptors will generally be residents at home;

View Sensitivity

The sensitivity of these views is likely to be high, located within the National Landscape, with view receptors being high sensitivity residents.

Figure 47 - Photographic record of baseline conditions: Private views



Properties on Sole Street (inc. Westbank and Jy Suis Jy Reste) from the northwestern corner of the site



Properties on Greenlands, to the east of Sole Street, from the northwestern corner of the site



Cobhambury Barn and dwelling on opposite side of Cobhambury Road, from Batt's Road

4.15. Private views from surrounding properties

Residential properties adjacent to the site on Gold Street

- 4.15.1. These views represent those available from adjoining residential properties on Gold Street, including Hevers Cottage and Mulberry House to the south of Gold Street and Danes Place and The Briars to the north. Although there are substantial mature trees and vegetation surrounding these properties, these are largely within the curtilage of the properties and there is limited understorey with possible glimpsed / filtered summer views into the northwestern part of the site from selected rear facing windows and gardens of the properties adjoining the site. Properties to the north of the road may have glimpsed / filtered views into the northwestern part of the site from south facing windows. All views would be more open during winter months.
- 4.15.2. View receptors would be residents at home with a high level of interest in the surrounding landscape, all located within the National Landscape. Views would have a national value, a high susceptibility to change and a high sensitivity.

Residential properties at the western end of Gold Street and on Sole Street

- 4.15.3. These views represent those available from properties: at the western end of Gold Street / at the junction with Sole Street; to the west of Sole Street, including Westbank and Jy Suis Jy Reste; and to the east of Sole Street, at Greenlands. Properties to the east of Greenlands and on raised ground to the west of Sole Street have views to the western site boundary, filtered in places by intervening vegetation. Properties on Gold Street and adjacent on Sole Street have oblique views towards the site, with the northwestern part of the site often screened by intervening vegetation.
- 4.15.4. View receptors would be residents at home with a high level of interest in the surrounding landscape, with those on Gold Street and east of Sole Street located within the National Landscape. Many views would have a national value, a high susceptibility to change and a high sensitivity, with those outside of the National Landscape having a medium sensitivity.

Properties on Cobhambury Road, Cobham

- 4.15.5. These views represent those available from elevated land to the northeast of the site, on the southern edge of Cobham. An unnamed house to the west of Cobhambury Road would have views from south / west facing windows and grounds across open farmland towards the site, similar to those gained from viewpoint 20. Similar views may be possible from Cobhambury Barn, to the east of the road. Grade II listed Cobhambury House is located within Cobhambury Farm complex, but surrounded by mature vegetation it is unlikely to have views towards the site.
- 4.15.6. View receptors would be residents at home with a high level of interest in the surrounding landscape, located within the National Landscape and Cobham Conservation Area. All would have a national value, with a high susceptibility to change, and a high sensitivity for residents.

Figure 48 - Summary of Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Viewpoint Reference Number	Reference Name	Type of Visual Receptor	Distance to centre of site	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
1	Gold Street (junction with Batts Road)	Rural lane	190m	National	Medium / High	Medium / High
2	Gold Street	Rural lane	275m	National	Medium / High	Medium / High
3	Gold Street	Rural lane	325m	National	Medium / High	Medium / High
4	Gold Street	Rural lane	360m	National	Medium / High	Medium / High
5	Batt's Road	Rural lane	275m	National	Medium / High	Medium / High
6	Batt's Road	Rural lane	640m	National	Medium / High	Medium / High
7	Gold Street	Rural lane	100m	National	Medium / High	Medium / High
8	Public footpath number NS190	Public footpath	160m	National	High	High
9	Gold Street	Rural lane	75m	National	Medium / High	Medium / High
10	Gold Street	Rural lane	115m	National	Medium / High	Medium / High
11	Gold Street	Rural lane	215m	National	Medium / High	Medium / High
12	Sole Street (junction with Gold Street)	Rural road	290m	National	Medium	Medium / High
13	Sole Street	Rural road	310m	National	Medium	Medium / High
14	Public footpath number NS190	Public footpath	160m	National	High	High
15	Public footpath number NS190	Public footpath	230m	National	High	High
16	Public footpath number NS190	Public footpath	500m	National	High	High
17	Public bridleway number NS242, Wealdway	Public bridleway, long distance route and route promoted by Camer Park Country Park	750m	National	High	High
18	Public footpath number NS190	Public footpath	1.0km	National	High	High
19	Public footpath number NS173	Public footpath and promoted route (walks in West Kent - Meopham)	1.3km	National	High	High

Viewpoint Reference Number	Reference Name	Type of Visual Receptor	Distance to centre of site	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
20	Cobhambury Road	Rural road	1.25km	National	Medium	Medium / High
21	Public footpath number NS185	Public footpath	985m	National	High	High
22	Public footpath number NS188	Public footpath	1.25km	National	High	High

5. References

- National Character Assessment (NCA, 2014)
- National Design Guide, Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2019)
- National Planning Policy Framework (2019)
- The Landscape Institute and IEMA 'Guidelines for landscape and visual impact assessment' 3rd Edition (2013)
- Natural England 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment' (2014)
- Natural England: 'Agricultural Land Classification mapping' (2010)
- MAGIC website
- Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)
- Kent Downs National Landscape Management Plan 2021-2026
- Kent Downs National Landscape Viticulture Test & Trial Final Report June 2021
- Kent Downs National Landscape - Landscape Character Assessment Update 2020 Revised and Published 2023;
- Landscape Assessment of Kent October 2004.
- Kent Downs National Landscape Farmstead Guidance
- Kent Farmsteads Guidance
- Kent Downs Landscape Design Handbook
- Kent Downs National Landscape Guidance on the selection and use of colour in development – Guidance
- Gravesham Green Belt Study, 2018
- Gravesham Stage 2 Green Belt Study Final Report, 2020
- Gravesham Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study, 2016

Appendix 1: LVE Methodology

1. Scope and methodology of study

1.1. Scoping of the study

- 1.1.1. The geographical scope of the landscape baseline included the site itself and parts of the area immediately surrounding the site likely to be impacted by the proposals. The landscape character of the wider area, as described in published landscape character assessments carried out at local level has been reviewed and used as context. A detailed character assessment of the site and its immediate setting has been carried out as part of this study. The geographical scope of the visual study was established through the creation of a computer-generated zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) which ruled out some areas where landform would block views. On site verification of visibility was undertaken to establish what is visible in the surrounding area from eye level within the site. The ZTV and site assessment of visibility are checked during fieldwork from publicly accessible viewpoints within the study area. The areas of potential visibility were then checked in the field by visiting publicly accessible areas and photographs were taken to record views towards the site.

1.2. Methodology Guidance

- 1.2.1. This study has been undertaken in a systematic fashion based on the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' 3rd Edition (Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and The Landscape Institute, 2013), referred to in this report as GLVIA3 and Natural England's An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (2014).

1.3. Desktop research

- 1.3.1. The desktop survey included the review of OS maps, aerial photography, landscape character assessment documents and related planning policy, as well as the submitted proposals.

1.4. Method statements

- 1.4.1. The photographs used in this evidence were taken in summer, meaning that vegetation was with leaf cover, therefore not able to demonstrate 'worst-case' visibility in winter. Where seasonal changes in screening are relevant this has been noted. The ZTV was created in ArcMap by importing a georeferenced Ordnance Survey (OS) map base and bare-earth digital terrain model (DTM). The DTM shows only landform and does not account for structures or vegetation which rise above ground level and potentially screen views. Points were added to represent heights of proposed built form in a number of locations across the site. Running a viewshed analysis then showed areas from which a 1.65m height viewer could potentially see proposed built form with no structures or vegetation blocking views. On site assessment of views possible from eye level within the site further informed the potential visibility. Areas with potential views of the proposed development were visited (where publicly accessible) and photographs taken to record the nature of views. Any areas from which there was no visibility were ruled out of the fieldwork.
- 1.4.2. It should be noted that the establishment of a ZTV is a potentially misleading exercise, showing an indiscriminate level of visibility using a 'bare earth' scenario, without consideration for vegetation and built form that may often prevent views, and takes no account of the extent of accessible viewpoints. It is a desktop exercise, a tool to inform the scope of fieldwork that has then to be tested on site and in the field to check the reality of the situation. An LVE and LVIA should be proportional to the nature of the proposals to which it relates and there may be no need to carry out a ZTV exercise. This should be judged on a project by project basis, in consultation with the Local Planning Authority where possible, when agreeing the scope of the study.

2. Evaluation criteria for Landscape Sensitivity

2.1. Reporting on the landscape baseline

- 2.1.1. The landscape baseline is established through careful fieldwork and review of published Landscape Character Assessments. Landscape Character Assessments at national, regional, district and local levels are critically reviewed to establish the most

relevant in terms of scale, level of detail, methodology, age. A brief explanation of this approach is given:

- Map, describe and illustrate the character of the landscape by appropriate means;
- Identify landscape based designations and others (conservation, heritage etc.) that may be impacted by the development;
- Identify and describe the individual elements and aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape that contribute to the character;
- Indicate the condition of the landscape;
- Establish the relative value of the landscape as attached to it by society.

2.2. Landscape receptors

- 2.2.1. The landscape receptors need to be identified; these are components of the landscape such as individual elements or features, qualities or landscape character that are likely to be affected by the scheme.

2.3. Sensitivity of landscape receptor

- 2.3.1. In assessing landscape sensitivity, landscape value is the 'inherent' component relating to the existing situation, whereas the susceptibility is 'development specific'. The sensitivity of the landscape or feature of the landscape as a receptor is determined by combining judgements on value with those on susceptibility to type of change or type of development proposed.

2.3.2. Determining value of landscape receptor

2.3.2.1. Context

When assessing landscape value of a site as part of a planning application or appeal it is important to consider not only the site itself and its features, elements, characteristics, qualities, but also their relationship with, and the role they play within, the site's context. The basis for judgements should be linked back to evidence from the baseline study.

NPPF para. 174 refers to valued landscapes but does not define the meaning of such. It states that policies and decisions should protect and enhance such 'in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan' or by 'recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside', that latter being a reference to non-designated landscapes.

2.3.2.2. Designated and non-designated landscapes

Designations can be used to assist the interpretation of the value to be attributed to different receptors, but it is acknowledged in GLVIA3 (5.4) that in-depth study may find the landscape value of a specific area is different to that suggested by a wider formal designation.

A lack of designation or LPA guidance on value does not, however, indicate a lack of value as noted in GLVIA3 (5.26). In these cases, reference should be made to the GLVIA Table 5.1, LI Technical Guidance Note (TGN 2/21), NPPF and other guidance sources. The TGN suggests factors to be considered in the identification of value; these are not exhaustive and may not all be relevant to the study. Community consultation, where practical, may also add depth in determining what people value about their local landscapes.

A range of factors is identified in the TGN; the following table setting out the factors to be considered is based on this (where text is in bold this indicates that the phrase is taken directly from the TGN).

Factor	Definition <i>(and examples where more clarity is useful)</i>
Natural heritage	Landscape with clear evidence of ecological, geological, geomorphological, or physiographic interest which contributes positively to the landscape
Cultural heritage	Landscape with clear evidence of archaeological, historical, or cultural interest which contributes positively to the landscape; landscape that contributes to setting of heritage assets or shows demonstrable or perceptible time depth.
Landscape condition	Landscape which is in a good physical state both with regard to individual elements and overall landscape structure (previously referred to as quality); this may include the extent to which the wider landscape character is represented, the intactness of the landscape and the condition of individual elements (N.B. management inappropriate to the landscape (over management or lack of management) should not be a reason to influence a judgement as this is a retrievable issue or may be appropriate in its wider landscape setting).
Associations	Landscape which is connected with notable people, events and the arts
Distinctiveness	Landscape that has a strong sense of identity: distinctive features characteristic of a particular place, rare or unusual features, especially those that help to confer a strong sense of place or identity; landscape which makes an important contribution to the character or identity of a settlement, including gateways and approaches that provide sense of arrival and contribute to settlement character.
Recreational	Landscape offering recreational opportunities where experience of landscape is important: including open access land, common land and public rights of way (particularly National Trails, long distance trails, Coastal Paths and Core Paths) where appreciation of landscape is a feature; areas with good accessibility that provide opportunities for outdoor recreation and spiritual experience/ inspiration; presence of town and village greens; other physical evidence of recreational use where experience of landscape is important; landscape that forms part of a view that is important to the enjoyment of a recreational activity.
Perceptual (scenic)	Landscape that appeals to the senses, primarily the visual sense: Distinctive features such as dramatic or striking landform or harmonious combinations of land cover; strong aesthetic qualities such as scale, form, colour, and texture; presence of natural lines in the landscape; visual diversity or contrasts which contribute to appreciation; memorable/ distinctive views and landmarks, or landscape which contributes to such.

Perceptual (wildness and tranquillity)	Landscape with a strong perceptual value notably wildness, tranquillity and/or dark skies: High levels of tranquillity or perceptions of tranquillity, including perceived links to nature, presence of wildlife / birdsong and relative peace and quiet; presence of wild land and perceptions of relative wildness (resulting from a high degree of perceived naturalness, rugged or otherwise challenging terrain, remoteness from public mechanised access and lack of modern artefacts); sense of particular remoteness, seclusion or openness; dark skies
Functional	Landscape which performs a clearly identifiable and valuable function, particularly in the healthy functioning of the landscape: such as natural hydrological systems, pollinator rich meadows, features forming parts of multifunctional green infrastructure networks, providing ecosystem services, and landscape with strong links or acting as settings to adjacent designated landscapes or are important to the appreciation of such.

2.3.2.3. Overall judgement of value

Once designations (if relevant) and factors, such as listed above, are all considered, then an overall value can be attributed to the landscape receptor using the range of values below, in terms of relative importance with examples:

Value	Description	Examples
International	Landscape designated as of international importance; setting of these should also be considered where contributes to special qualities	World Heritage Sites Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) Special Protection Areas (SPA)
National (incl. regional)	Landscape designated as of national importance for beauty or for recreational opportunities; setting of these should also be considered where contributes to special qualities	National Park / AONB SSSI Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG; forming SPA and SAC buffers) HE Register of Parks and Gardens Scheduled monuments Grade I and Grade II* listed buildings National recreational routes or area
Local Authority		Local landscape designation Open Access or Common Land Land value identified in Local or Neighbourhood Plan or other supplementary evidence bases SINC / Conservation Areas Grade II listed buildings Local Wildlife sites Local recreational route or area

Community	Landscape with no formal designation but having perceived value to local communities, on basis of factors that elevate it above an 'ordinary' landscape	
Low	Ordinary landscape with no designations or identified value. Areas in poor condition or altered by intrusive man-made structures.	

2.3.2.4. Determining the landscape receptor's susceptibility to type of change

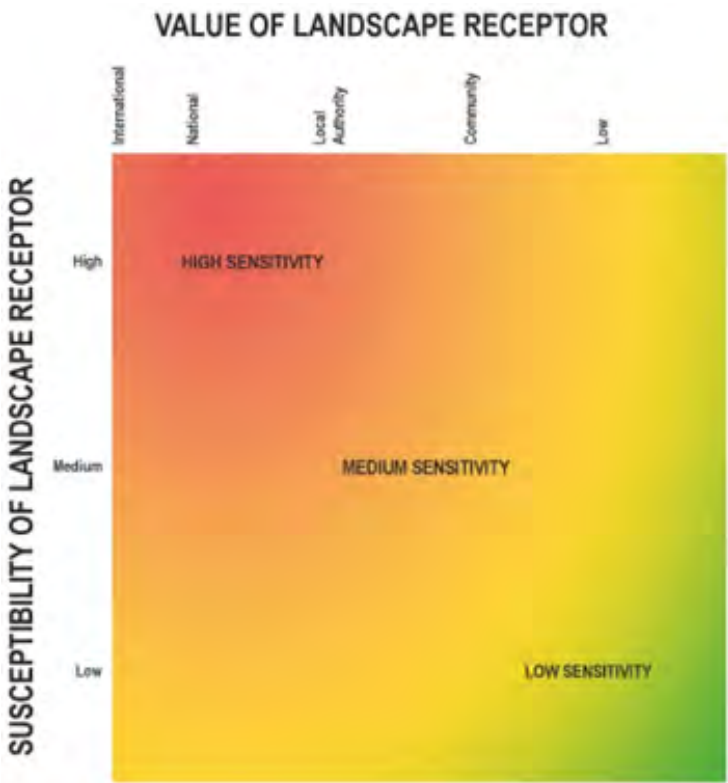
Susceptibility to change is the ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate the type of change or type of proposed development without undue consequence for the maintaining of the baseline situation, or incompatibility with landscape planning policy or strategies. The basis for judgements should be linked back to evidence from the baseline study.

Judgements on susceptibility to change should be determined on a scale of high, medium or low:

Judgement	Guidance
HIGH susceptibility to change	High susceptibility where key characteristics having no or limited ability to accommodate type of change or type of development without transformational adverse consequences to the baseline situation or being incompatible with landscape planning policies and strategies.
MEDIUM susceptibility to change	Medium susceptibility where the characteristics of the site have some ability to accommodate the proposed type of change or type of development without transformational adverse consequences to the baseline situation or being incompatible to landscape planning policies and strategies.
LOW susceptibility to change	Low susceptibility where generally characteristics are able to accommodate proposed type of change or type of development without transformational adverse consequences to the baseline situation or being incompatible with landscape planning policies and strategies.

2.3.2.5. Determining the resultant level of sensitivity of landscape receptor

By combining judgements on value with those on susceptibility to type of change or type of development proposed, the level of sensitivity of a landscape receptor should be defined as high, medium or low, using the colour graded diagram below for guidance.



Where judgements on value and susceptibility to change differ (e.g. value may be high, with a medium susceptibility to change) professional judgement will be used to determine the overall sensitivity and the terminology high / medium and medium / low may be used or the judgement may be decided on balance.

3. Evaluation criteria for Visual Sensitivity

3.1. Sensitivity of the visual receptor

3.1.1. The sensitivity of the visual receptor needs to be established. This is determined by combining judgements on value attached to a particular view with judgements on the susceptibility of the visual receptor to type of change or type of development proposed.

3.1.2. Determining value of the view

3.1.3. This is a judgement of value attached to the particular view, through planning designations, recognition of historic, tourism or cultural value, or through community or perceived value. Once designations (if relevant) and factors, such as listed above, are all considered, then an overall value can be attributed to the visual receptor using the range of values below, in terms of relative importance with examples:

Value	Description
International	View from internationally known viewpoint. View associated with landscape designated to be of international importance View promoted in maps and tourist literature with international importance or linked with internationally important visitor attraction View having internationally important cultural associations

National (incl. regional)	View from nationally known viewpoint. View within landscape designated to be of national importance for beauty or for recreational opportunities. View promoted in maps and tourist literature with national importance or linked with nationally important visitor attraction. View having nationally important cultural associations.
Local Authority	View from locally known viewpoint or within locally designated landscape. View identified in planning policy or supplementary evidence base (NDP, VDS, CAA etc). View linked with locally important visitor attraction experience. View having locally important cultural associations.
Community	View within landscape without formal designation but having acknowledged value to local communities (eg. mentioned in VDS or NP).
Low	View within landscape without formal designation, not linked to visitor attractions and with no cultural associations.

3.1.4. Determining the visual receptor’s susceptibility to type of change

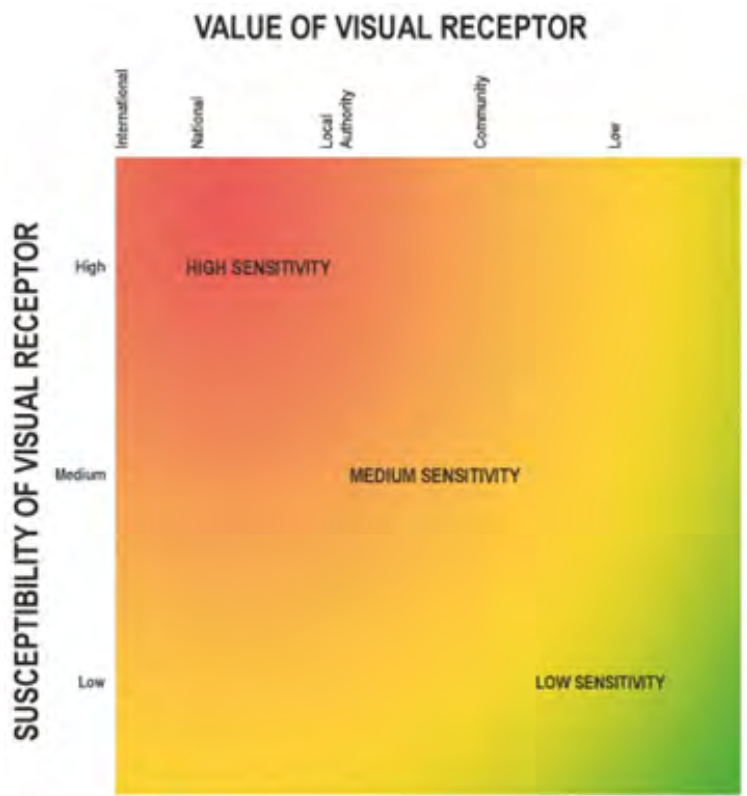
Judgements are dependent on the occupation or activity of people experiencing the views and the extent their attention or interest is likely to be focused on the on views and the visual amenity they experience at particular locations.

Judgements on susceptibility to change should be determined on a scale of high, medium or low:

Judgement	Guidance
HIGH susceptibility to change	Visual receptors particularly susceptible to change in general due to a high level of interest in the surrounding landscape. Receptors most susceptible to change are likely to include residents at home, people engaged in outdoor recreation whose attention or interest is likely to be focused on the landscape, visitors to heritage assets where the landscape contributes to the experience and communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area
MEDIUM susceptibility to change	Visual receptors with a medium susceptibility to change in general due to a medium level of interest in the surrounding landscape. Travellers on road, rail and transport routes are likely to fall into a category of medium susceptibility to change, however where travel involved scenic routes this is likely to increase as awareness of views is heightened.
LOW susceptibility to change	Visual receptors with a low susceptibility to change in general due to a low level of interest in the surrounding landscape. Receptors least susceptible include people engaged in outdoor sport or recreation that does not involve or depend appreciation of views and people at their place of work where attention is not focused on their surroundings

3.1.5. Level of sensitivity of the visual receptor

By combining judgements on value of view with those on susceptibility to type of change or type of development proposed, the level of sensitivity of a visual receptor should be defined as high, medium or low, using the colour graded diagram below for guidance.



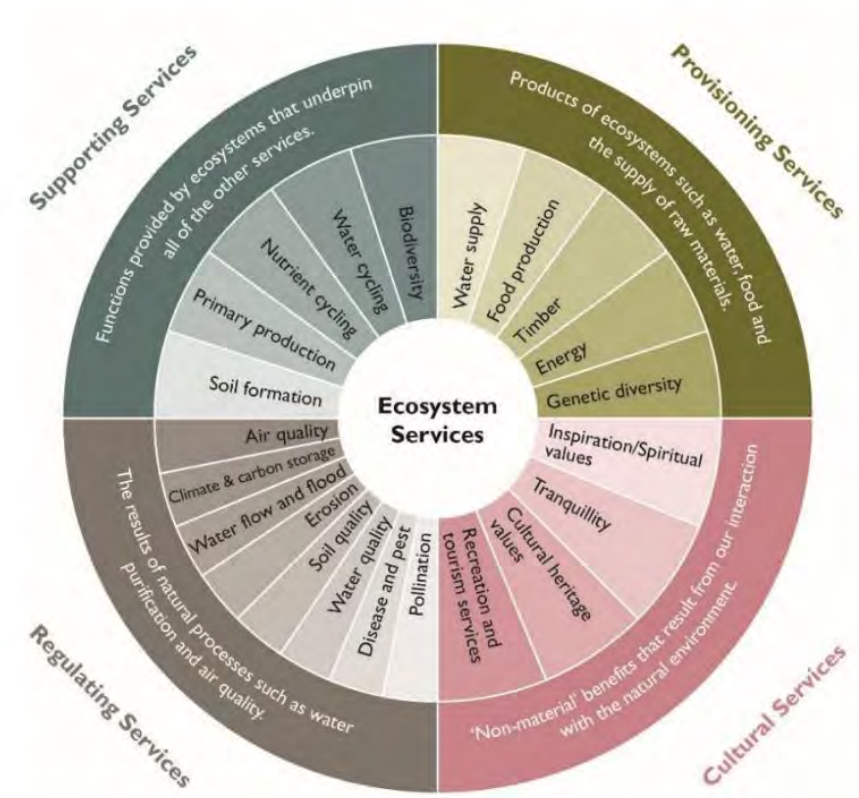
Where judgements on value and susceptibility to change differ (e.g. value may be high, with a medium susceptibility to change) professional judgement will be used to determine the overall sensitivity.

3.2. Photographs

3.2.1. Photographs were taken using a Nikon D3100 digital SLR camera at a 35mm focal length using a 18-55mm variable zoom lens set at a focal length of 35mm which is accepted as being equivalent to a fixed 50mm lens on a non-digital SLR, which is in turn generally accepted to most closely represent views seen with the naked eye. It has been noted against photographs where a wide-angle focal length setting was used in order to show close up foreground views, or where a zoom setting was used to show more detail in a distant view.

4. Glossary of key terms

- Ecosystem services: Ecosystem services are products and processes of the environment that lead to benefits for people. The UK National Ecosystem Assessment – a major study of the value of the environment to people – defined ecosystem services as: ‘The benefits people obtain from ecosystems. These include provisioning services such as food and water; regulating services such as flood and disease control; cultural services such as spiritual, recreational, and cultural benefits; and supporting services such as nutrient cycling that maintain the conditions for life on Earth.’ Ecosystem services are the result of the interaction of human and natural systems, including the way that environments are designed and managed (see image below, courtesy of South Downs National Park Authority).



Ecosystem Services wheel, courtesy of South Downs National Park Authority

- Landscape character: A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.
- Landscape character area: Geographically identifiable areas of landscape that have their own individual sense of place.
- Landscape character type: Landscapes sharing broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation, historical land use and settlement pattern, which may have been found in different parts of the country.
- Time depth: The visible evidence in the landscape for change and continuity over periods.
- Tranquillity: A sense of a lack of disturbance from either visual or noise intrusion.

Appendix 2: Landscape Baseline Table

(Most relevant shaded green, most detailed shaded orange)

	NCA Additional characteristics from: NCA 119: North Downs;	Regional Kent Downs National Landscape Landscape Character Assessment Update 2020 / 2023 Landscape Character Area 1A West Kent Downs: Local Character Area: Luddesdown	Regional Additional characteristics from: Landscape Assessment of Kent October 2004 Luddesdown: West Kent Downs Adjoins Ash Downs (SW) / Southfleet Arable Lands (NW)	Terra firma observations (most detailed characteristics)
Topography / soils	Chalk soils are predominant across the NCA but the upper part of the dip slope is capped by extensive clay-with-flint deposits. Patches of clay and sandy soils also occur with coombe deposits common in dry valleys. Cretaceous Chalk forms the backbone of the North Downs: - A distinctive chalk downland ridge rises up from the surrounding land, with a steep scarp slope to the south. - The broad dip slope gradually drops towards the Thames affording extensive views across London and the Thames Estuary. The carved topography provides a series of dry valleys, ridges and plateaux.	West Kent Downs: - Underlying geology of Cretaceous chalk, overlain with clay-with-flints, and occasional pockets of sand and gravel. - A dip-slope landform of dry valleys running roughly north-south, interspersed with broad undulating ridges and plateaux.	Luddesdown: - Rolling valleyside pasture and extensive undulating arable fields.	South facing aspect to the site, falling from a high point of around 100 metres AOD on the northwestern boundary on Gold Street to approximately 92 metres AOD at the lowest point on the southern boundary. The surrounding undulating downland falls to a valley, 50 metres AOD at Henley Sreet, Lower Luddesdown and Luddesdown to the southeast, separated from the site by high ground at Henley Down. The A227 to the west of the site and Sole Street runs north-south on a ridge of high ground through the villages of Meopham and Hook Green. Cobham lies on high ground to the northeast of the site. The ridge of the North Downs at around 200 metres AOD lies approximately 4km to the south of the site. Chalk visible on the walls of the railway cutting on the southern site boundary.
Hydrology	The area is cut by the deep valleys of the Stour, Medway, Darent, Wey and Mole. The river valleys cut through the chalk ridge, providing distinctive local landscapes which contrast with the steep scarp slope. The undulating topography of the dip slope has also been etched by streams and rivers, today forming dry valleys, some of which carry winterbournes that occasionally flow in the dip slope, depending on the level of the chalk aquifer.	West Kent Downs: - Very little surface water, limited to occasional pools where clay impedes drainage.		No known water features within, or in the vicinity the site. The River Medway lies on a floodplain to the south of the North Downs, 5.0km to the southeast of the site at its closest. The River Thames is around 7km to the north of the site at Gravesend.

	NCA Additional characteristics from: NCA 119: North Downs;	Regional Kent Downs National Landscape Landscape Character Assessment Update 2020 / 2023 Landscape Character Area 1A West Kent Downs: Local Character Area: Luddesdown	Regional Additional characteristics from: Landscape Assessment of Kent October 2004 Luddesdown: West Kent Downs Adjoins Ash Downs (SW) / Southfleet Arable Lands (NW)	Terra firma observations (most detailed characteristics)
Vegetation and nature conservation	Woodland is found on areas of the dip slope capped with clay-with-flints. Wellwooded hedgerows and shaws are an important component of the field boundaries, contributing to a strongly wooded character. Much of the woodland is ancient. Tracts of species-rich chalk grassland and patches of chalk heath are important downland habitats and of international importance.	West Kent Downs: Extensive blocks of woodland, as well as strips of woodland on valley sides. Luxuriant hedgerows and (in places) parkland trees add to the sense of enclosure and of a well-treed landscape. - Semi-natural habitats include ancient woodland, chalk grassland, scrub and occasional small quarry sites. Veteran trees occur in parkland and woodland. Luddesdown: - Fields generally divided with native hedgerows. - Large areas of native mixed woodland dominate the skyline, and form thick 'walls' around the fields, giving a strong definition to the fields and providing valuable ecological habitat.	Luddesdown: - Many hedgerows removed	Vegetation within / surrounding the site: Within the site: - vines planted across the site; - Woodland copse oppsite site access, at junction of Gold Stret and Batt's Road: mature trees and understorey of predominantly sweet chestnut, with field maple, holly, poplar, thorn; Site boundaries: - Western boundary: largely open post and wire fenced boundary to pasture in the north, vegetation on adjoining land to the south; - Southern boundary: vegetated railway cutting forms low vegetation along the southern boundary; - Gold Street (west): largely vegetated on the western side of Gold Street; occasional mature trees / gappy hedgerow including field maple, cherry, hazel, holly, ash, thorn; - Gold Street (east): largely open, post and wire fencing and ruderal growth of bank / verge (with the exception of the woodland copse); - Batt's Road (south): largely open, post and wire fencing and ruderal growth of verge (with the exception of the woodland copse to the west and a wooded area in the far eastern corner of the site).

	NCA Additional characteristics from: NCA 119: North Downs;	Regional Kent Downs National Landscape Landscape Character Assessment Update 2020 / 2023 Landscape Character Area 1A West Kent Downs: Local Character Area: Luddesdown	Regional Additional characteristics from: Landscape Assessment of Kent October 2004 Luddesdown: West Kent Downs Adjoins Ash Downs (SW) / Southfleet Arable Lands (NW)	Terra firma observations (most detailed characteristics)
Pattern of landscape and settlement	The NCA retains over 1,000 ha under fruit. More recently, there has been an increase in novel crops, for example viticulture. Small, nucleated villages and scattered farmsteads including oasts and barns form the settlement pattern, with local flint, chalk and Wealden brick the vernacular materials. In the western part of the area, around and to the west of Sevenoaks and into Surrey, there is increased urban development.	West Kent Downs: - Arable agriculture is the predominant land use, with some pasture. Fields vary in shape and size, but are generally hedged. - Main roads are limited to the periphery, and the lanes which run through it are generally narrow, quiet and lined with trees or hedges. Some are sunken, particularly where they cut through valley sides. Luddesdown: - A rich agricultural patchwork of rolling, valley-side pastures and undulating arable fields. - The field pattern is irregular, with fields of various shapes and sizes. - Late twentieth century hedgerow removal in areas of arable cultivation, has increased the importance of woodland in giving structure to the landscape. - Recent vineyard planting is generating a notable change to the agricultural patterns of the landscape. - Settlement is limited to occasional hamlets and isolated farms within valleys, reflecting the fact that the soils were difficult to work and could only support a small population. The lack of settlement is one of the area's characteristic features. - The farms and hamlets are linked by a network of narrow and winding lanes which follow the contours of the rolling downland landscape.	Luddesdown: Threatened from the west by creeping suburbanisation and from the east by urban and industrial influences, it is still a peaceful, rural area. - The unity between landform and landscape elements is slightly interrupted by loss of hedgerow and the intensity of some areas of cultivation. However, there are very few visual detractors - some unsympathetic farm complexes and pylons amongst other minor detractors. - intensive agricultural use within arable areas on the lower slopes. - tree cover is good, but field boundaries are few and declining - The scattered and isolated historic farmsteads are dominated by piecemeal residential development in the west of the character area. - Characteristic building styles are of mixed age and have a moderate positive impact	Pattern of the landscape immediately surrounding the site has changed very little since the late 19th century. Map 1 at Figure 14 shows OS mapping from 1895. Orchards are shown in the northern part of the site and extend around Sole Street, with the public right of way crossing the site, the railway and Gold Street and Batt's Road as existing. Residential properties to the north of the site, Danes Place and Hevers Cottage are shown. Sole Street has limited development at this time, concentrated around the railway / Sole Street station. By the 1960's OS mapping shows increased extent of orchards, now covering the extent of the site and land to the north towards Cobham. Pylons are shown on this mapping. Development at Sole Street has increased, extending north and west of the station including Greenlands to the east of Sole Street.
Access and recreation	Ancient paths, drove roads and trackways, often sunken, cross the landscape and are a distinctive feature of the dip slope. The landscape offers significant opportunities for leisure and recreation with good access for walking and gentle heights and upland areas. It is traversed by both the North Downs Way National Trail, largely following the chalk scarp, and the Pilgrims' Way long-distance route. This is supported by a relatively dense rights of way network, particularly within the two AONB, as well as more than 3,500 ha of open access land, accessible parkland, country parks and National Nature Reserves.	West Kent Downs: Cobham Park, Ranscombe Farm Reserve, Ashenbank Woods and Shorne Woods Country park are popular places for local people to visit and enjoy the countryside. Luddesdown: - The Wealdway Long Distance footpath runs north-south through the area.		Public footpath number NS109 crosses the site from Gold Street on the northern boundary to the railway on the southern boundary, linking Cobham to the northeast with Meopham to the southwest. Extensive network of public rights of way crossing the surrounding area, including: the Wealdway long distance route. Recreation opportunities: Camer Park Country Park to the southwest; Jeskyns Community Woodland and open access land to the north of Cobham and the site; Shorne Woods Country Park to the north of the A2 and the site; Cobham Park Deer Park and Ranscombe Farm Country Park to the northeast.

	NCA Additional characteristics from: NCA 119: North Downs;	Regional Kent Downs National Landscape Landscape Character Assessment Update 2020 / 2023 Landscape Character Area 1A West Kent Downs: Local Character Area: Luddesdown	Regional Additional characteristics from: Landscape Assessment of Kent October 2004 Luddesdown: West Kent Downs Adjoins Ash Downs (SW) / Southfleet Arable Lands (NW)	Terra firma observations (most detailed characteristics)
Historical character	Defensive structures such as castles, hill forts and Second World War installations, and historic parks, buildings and monuments are found throughout.	West Kent Downs: - A strongly historic landscape, much of which has seen relatively little landscape change. Historic settlements and churches are linked by a network of ancient lanes, within a setting of fields, woodland and historic parkland. Luddesdown: - The settlements of Luddesdown and Lower Luddesdown comprise clusters of traditional buildings, including Luddesdown Court (Grade 1 listed) and the thirteenth century church of St Peter and St Paul. A church was recorded here in the Domesday Book, and the adjacent house and farm are late eleventh century in origin. There are good examples of traditional timber-framed buildings and Kent peg tiles, including the Upper Bush Conservation Area.	Luddesdown: - The area has a strong time-depth, reinforced by the distinctive ridgeline woodland and ancient highway routes. - The historic hedgerow pattern is in decline and no longer contributes to the local distinctiveness. - Many of the characteristic narrow, banked roads are open within arable areas, having lost their hedged boundaries. However, where they persist, they have a distinctive mix of species and are characteristically tall.	Listed buildings: 3 Grade II residential properties in Sole Street. Sole Street House may have views to the site (approx. 300m from the location of the proposed building); Cluster of listed buildings in Cobham, just over 1km to the northeast of the site. Grade I Cobham College and St Mary Magdelene Parish Church do not have views to the site; Grade II Cobhambury House may have glimpsed winter views towards the site. Conservation Areas: Cobham Conservation Area: just under 1.0km to the northeast of the location of the proposed building on the site - limited intervisibility with the site - restricted to the southern boundary of the conservation area which is largely well treed. Some views towards the site from Cobhambury Road on the southern edge of the conservation area; Hook Green Conservation Area: 1.8km to the west of the location of the proposed building on the site - no intervisibility with the site. Meopham The Street Conservation Area: 2.0km to the southwest of the location of the proposed building on the site - no intervisibility with the site. Meopham Green Conservation Area: 3.0km to the southwest of the location of the proposed building on the site - no intervisibility with the site. Registered Park and Garden: Cobham Hall Grade II* - Late C18 and early C19 ornamental gardens and pleasure grounds laid out by Humphry Repton set within a park of probably C16 origin - approx. 1.3km to the northeast of the location of the proposed building on the site - no intervisibility with the site. Scheduled monuments: World War II Heavy Anti-aircraft gunsite (TS15), 250m east of Cobhambury Farm.